

L I B R A R Y O F C O N G R E S S

Near East Collections

A N I L L U S T R A T E D G U I D E

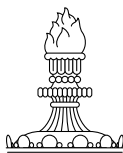


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Near East Collections is composed in Centaur, a typeface designed by American typographer and book designer Bruce Rogers (1870–1957). The full type font was first used at the Montague Press in 1915 for an edition of Maurice de Guérin's *The Centaur*. *Near East Collections* was designed by Robert L. Wiser, Archetype Press, Inc., Washington, D.C.

COVER: An Islamic book binding enameled with an intricate golden vine and highlighted with tiny burgundy and blue flowers is a particularly rich example of such bindings from the Kirkor Minassian collection. (*Near East Section*)

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Dedicated to

George N. Atiyeh
Head, Near East Section
1967–95

*"If thou would'st see the noblest of mankind,
Behold a monarch in a beggar's garb."*

Ismā'il Qāsim Abu al-'Atābiyah
(A.D. 747/748–826?)

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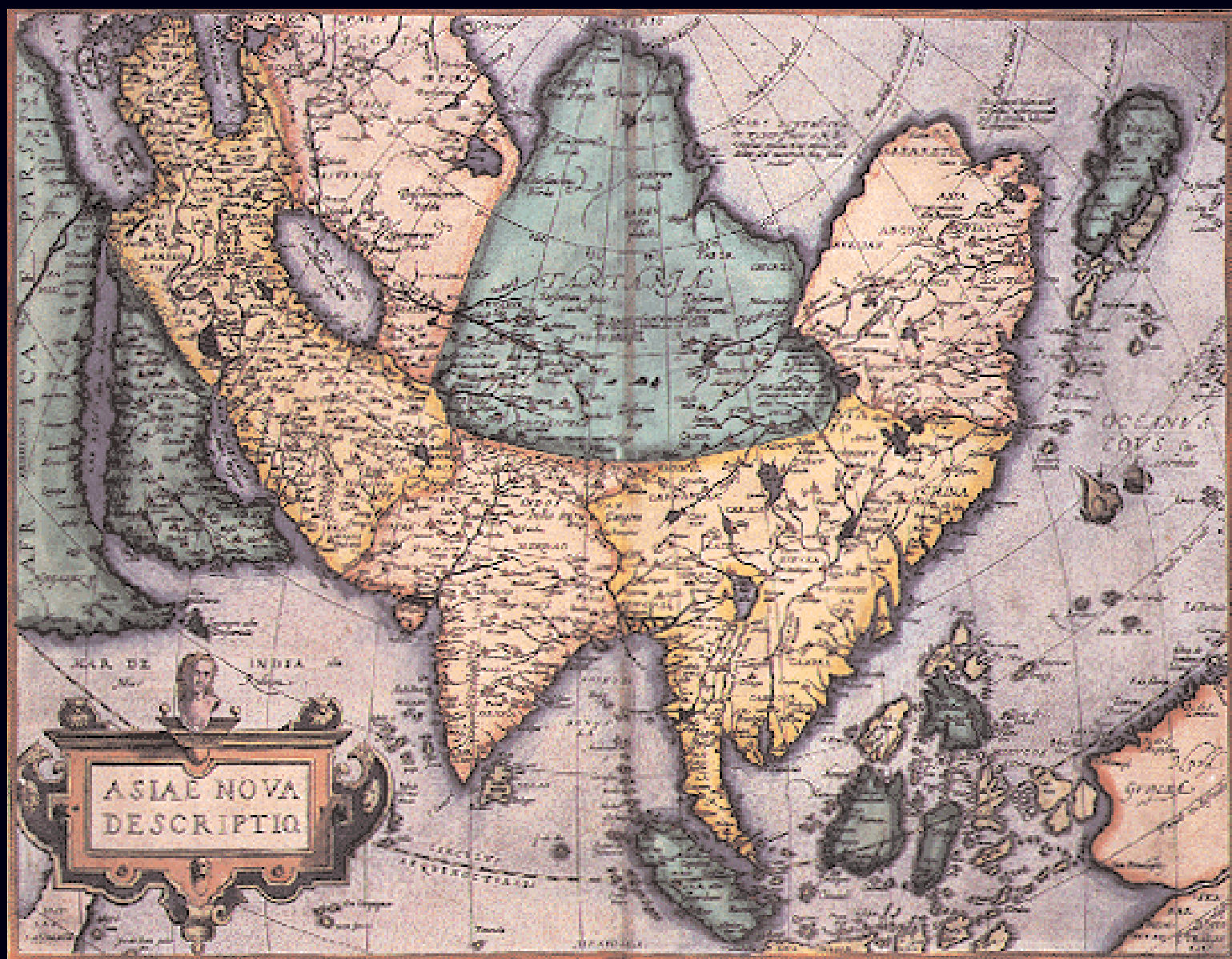
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Foreword

THE AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN DIVISION (AMED) was created in 1978 as part of a general Library of Congress reorganization. At that time, three disparate administrative units—the Near East Section, the African Section, and the Hebraic Section—were combined. Together they cover some seventy countries and regions from Southern Africa to the Maghreb and from the Middle East to Central Asia. The division coordinates and directs the component sections. Each section plays a vital role in the Library's acquisitions program; offers expert reference and bibliographic services to Congress and researchers in this country and abroad; develops projects, special events, and publications; and cooperates and participates with other institutions and scholarly and professional associations in the United States and around the world.

In 1945, the Near East Section was created as part of the Orientalia Division to serve as a focal point of the Library's programs for this pivotal area, which includes North Africa, the Arab world, Turkey, Iran, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Islam. Although proposed earlier, it was not until 1960—with mounting national academic and government interest in sub-Saharan Africa—that the Library's African Section was established, administered initially by the General Reference and Bibliography Division. This section focuses on virtually all topics relating to sub-Saharan Africa. The Hebraic Section, the oldest of the three, began operation in 1914 as part of the Division of Semitic and Oriental Literature, and it concentrates on Jewish culture, Israel, the Hebrew language, biblical studies, and the ancient Near East.

Volumes about the Middle East and Africa were among the books making up one of the first major purchases by the Library of Congress, the 1815 acquisition of Thomas Jefferson's library, the subject and linguistic range of which greatly influenced future Library acquisition policies. Although sporadic receipts of publications from or about the region were reported in various annual reports of the Librarian of Congress over the years, systematic acquisition efforts for publications from this part of the world were limited before World War II. Yet today the African and Middle Eastern Division is recognized as a major world resource center for the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Africa.

The Near East and Hebraic sections have custody of materials in many formats in the non-roman-alphabet languages of the region, which together number more than half a million volumes. Materials in more than forty languages are held by the Near East Section, the major holdings of which are in Arabic (the largest language group represented, with approximately 130,000

OPPOSITE. "Asiae Nova Descriptio," from the 1598 edition of Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, depicts the lands of the Middle East, Anatolia, Transcaucasia, and Central Asia. Ortelius's seminal work, originally published in Antwerp in 1570, is recognized as the first modern atlas. It included a world map, as well as continental and regional maps. (*Geography and Map Division*)

volumes), Persian, Turkish, non-Cyrillic Central Asian languages, Armenian, and Georgian. The Hebraic Section collections contain some 160,000 volumes in Hebrew and related languages, including Yiddish, Ladino, Syriac, and the languages of Ethiopia. Although the African Section has no formal custodial responsibilities, it maintains a pamphlet collection of more than 22,000 items.

To further enhance holdings already strong in the fields of history, literature, economics, linguistics, art, religion, and philosophical studies, division curators participate in acquiring materials of research value through purchase, copyright, exchange, and gift. Noteworthy grants and gifts have also served to strengthen these collections. For example, generous gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Dadian in the 1990s created an endowment to develop and maintain the Library's Armenian holdings. In 1960 a grant from the Carnegie Corporation provided initial support for the African Section, including staff travel to many African countries to obtain publications for the Library's collections. Gifts from Jacob H. Schiff, one in 1912 and another in 1914, enabled the Library to acquire nearly 10,000 volumes and substantially increased the Hebraic collections.

In the spring of 1997, the division moved from the John Adams Building to its present imposing location in the newly renovated Thomas Jefferson Building. The new African and Middle Eastern Division Reading Room houses a 10,000-volume reference collection and a rotating display of current events journals, arranged and maintained by each of the three sections. The division welcomes visitors and provides prearranged briefings on its activities and services for individuals and for groups. Researchers may consult specialists who readily provide in-depth reference assistance in identifying materials in their custodial collection as well as related sources about the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Africa in roman script and in other formats or specializations found in the Library of Congress General Collections or in units such as the Geography and Map Division, the Manuscript Division, the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, and the Law Library.

In the several display cases located in its grand reading room, the division mounts small exhibits such as *Oil and Petroleum in Africa and the Middle East*. Major exhibits featuring AMED collections have been mounted in the Library's galleries. *From the Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures of the Library of Congress* was prepared to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Hebraic Section, and a version of this exhibit later traveled to several North American cities.

Special events and outreach activities have long been part of the division's

OPPOSITE. The Persian mystical poet Sa'di (d. 1404) is an outstanding example of the Persian classical tradition. From a nineteenth-century manuscript of his poems, this richly colored illustration depicts the princess Shirin's attempt to hide her beauty from prince Khusrov, clearly enchanted, who is accompanied by a *Pir* (wiseman). (*Near East Section*)

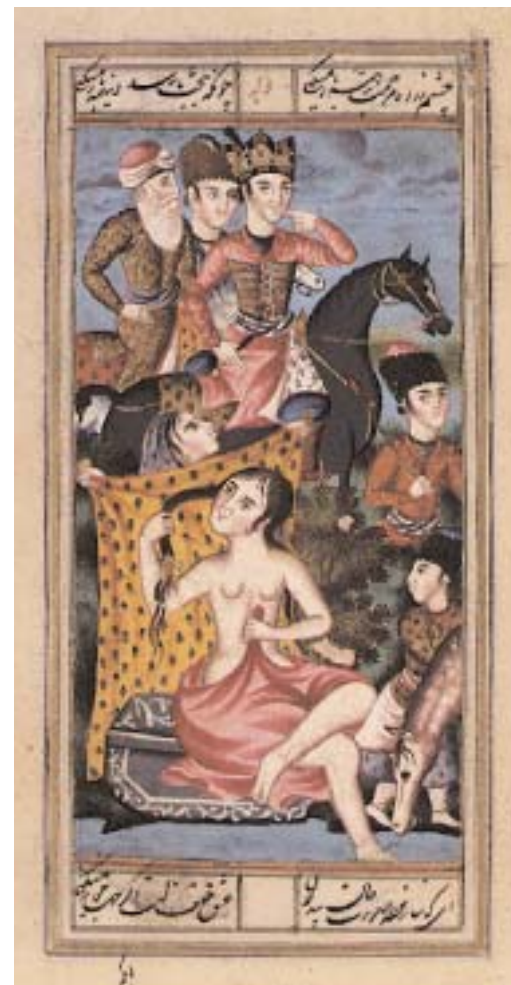
agenda. Working through the three sections, it sponsors many library, cultural, and scholarly programs. As part of its fiftieth anniversary celebration in 1995, the Near East Section held a conference on “Arab-American Cultural Relations,” and more recently, it cosponsored with the Embassy of Tunisia a panel of international experts who spoke on “Tunisia: Past, Present, and Future.” The Africana Librarians Council of the African Studies Association has held several of its semiannual meetings at the Library. Officials of the International Summer Seminar in Jewish Genealogy accepted an offer from the Hebraic Section to serve as host for the seminar’s 1995 meeting, making the Library’s outstanding genealogy-related resources readily available to participants. Lectures, including a research seminar series, are another important and ongoing part of the division’s outreach program. Well-known speakers such as MacArthur Fellow and human rights lawyer Gay McDougall, Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, and Egyptian philosopher Zaki Naguib Mahmoud have participated.

Another role of the division is to facilitate projects to enhance access to the collections, as it does through the widely acclaimed body of publications issued under its auspices. Titles prepared in the Near East Section include *The Holy Koran at the Library of Congress* and *American Doctoral Dissertations on the Arab World*. The African Section has compiled more than forty publications ranging from bibliographies of official publications of African nations to short subject guides on contemporary issues such as *Abuja: The New Federal Capital of Nigeria*. The catalog of the highly successful exhibit initiated by the Hebraic Section, *Scrolls from the Dead Sea: The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Scholarship*, published jointly by the Library and the Israel Antiquities Authority, received several awards for its design.

The African and Middle Eastern Division continues to exert a vital influence in the development of area studies librarianship. Its staff is recognized for scholarly publications. They serve as officers in area studies organizations and attend and participate in national and international meetings on their areas of expertise. And, finally, a significant contribution made by the division is in its training of young scholars and future librarians through briefings and presentations, the internships and volunteer positions it offers, and the mentoring it provides to promising candidates, thus preparing the way for the future success of the study of these vital areas in world culture.

BEVERLY GRAY

CHIEF, AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN DIVISION



Introduction

“We Taste the Spices of Arabia
Yet Never Feel the Scorching Sun
Which Brings Them Forth.”

Inscription above Statue of Commerce

*Main Reading Room
Thomas Jefferson Building
Library of Congress*

THE MIDDLE EAST; THE NEAR EAST; ANATOLIA; PARS ORIENTIS; PARS ASIAE. Or, simply, *the Orient*; *Asia Minor*; *Central Asia*. Many and varied are the names that have been given throughout the millennia to the lands and peoples who have populated the area whose literary works form the collections in the custody of the Near East Section of the African and Middle Eastern Division of the Library of Congress. Essentially geographic designations imposed upon this vital part of the world by the European West, each of these names both obscures within it that region's manifold achievements and promotes as many enduring stereotypes of its inhabitants as the number of the rivers flowing through it.

When the Near East Section celebrated its first fifty years of existence in August 1995, with lectures, seminars, and an exhibit of its choicest treasures, the last was fittingly called “Hearts and Minds without Borders: The Near East Experience.” These events underlined the breadth and scope of its collections and the success of its mission. The materials in the custody of the Orientalia Division long ago formed the nucleus of the Library's major research collection in all things Middle Eastern. In its breadth, the Library's collection takes us far beyond stereotypes, elucidating the nature of these ancient and modern societies and bringing forth both their past and their present glories. In the years that have followed that celebration the policies and activities that supported the section's success in serving all aspects of the Library of Congress's mission, but chiefly its mandate to collect and preserve the full spectrum of the world's intellectual heritage and to guarantee access to it, have continued.

The Near East Section was created in 1945 as part of the Orientalia Division, following the Allied victory in World War II. The war had heightened interest in the lands and peoples of the Near East and shown the need for extensive and reliable knowledge of the area. The section was given the custody of materials in over thirty-five vernacular languages spoken and written in lands stretching from the Atlantic coast of North Africa through the steppes of Central Asia; from the lush Caucasus mountain range in the north past the tropical Gulf States in the south. With the African Section, it now shares responsibility for the African countries that are part of the Arab League—the Sudan and the sub-Saharan countries of Mauritania, Somalia, Comoros, and Djibouti. The Hebraic Section handles the country of Israel, materials in Hebrew, Coptic, and Syriac languages, and the majority of the languages (and cultures) of the Ancient Near East. Combined with the immense number of works both in the Library's General Collections and in the many other custodial divisions of the Library of Congress, collections in Arabic, Armenian, Central Asian, Georgian, Persian, and Turkish languages, to



RELATION D'UN VOYAGE FAIT AU LEVANT.

DANS LAQUELLE IL EST CURIEUSEMENT TRAITE'
des Usages du Grand Seigneur, des Mœurs, Religions,
Forces, Gouvernemens, Politiques, Langues, &
coutumes des Habitans de ce grand empire.

*Et des singularités particulières de l'Arabie, de l'Asie, de l'Egypte,
de l'Ethiopie, de l'Inde, de la Perse, de la Turquie, & de
plusieurs autres lieux de l'Asie, de l'Afrique, & de l'Europe,
depuis son départ de France jusqu'à son retour.*

Outre les choses mémorables arrivées au dernier Siège de Bagdad,
les Cérémonies faites aux réceptions des Ambassadeurs du
Mogol. Et l'entretien de l'Auteur avec celui du
Prêtre Jean, où il est parlé des sources du Nil.

Par Monsieur DE THEVENOT.



A PARIS,

A PARIS,

Chez THOMAS JOTTIV, au Palais, dans la petite Salle, à la
Palme, & aux Armes d'Hollande.

M. DC. LXXV.

AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROI.

name only the major linguistic groupings housed in the Near East Section, form a powerful research center.

Vernacular collections are complemented by particular works in the Library's general and special collections, where materials relevant to the Middle East as a whole are found. Important Arabic, Armenian, Persian, Georgian, and Turkish manuscripts, along with their choicest illuminations from the imposing Greek monastic establishments at Mount Athos, from the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai, and from the Armenian and Greek Patriarchates of Jerusalem, were microfilmed as sets by the Library of Congress in the early 1950s and continue to be heavily used resources in the Microform Reading Room.

Illustrative of the memoirs of travelers through the Middle East is one by Jean de Thevenot (1633–67), *Relation d'un voyage fait au Levant*, published in Paris in 1665. The engraving opposite the work's title page depicts the author, in seventeenth-century Middle Eastern garb, pointing out on a map the lands through which he traveled. (*Rare Book and Special Collections Division*)



The internationally renowned Central Asian author Chingiz Aitmatov, a free-thinker in Soviet era Kirghizstan, has remained popular in his native country even after independence. Shown is an illustration from “The First Teacher,” published in an anthology of short stories (Bishkek, 1963). (*Near East Section*)

Other riveting examples are the accounts of travelers through North Africa, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and Central Asia—precious for their eyewitness testimony to religious, cultural, and political conditions—that fill the shelves of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division and are found as well in the Library’s General Collections.

The Manuscript Division possesses a rich storehouse of the private papers of government officials who served the United States and of missionaries who served their faith in the various regions of the Middle East. To these should be added the numerous publications of the Near East Relief Committee retained in the General Collections. Its charge was to assist the Middle Eastern countries, such as Armenia, Syria, and Turkey, to recover from the ravages that the First World War inflicted on them and their people.

The Law Library holds records of the laws and legal interpretations from these lands throughout the ages. Babylon’s law code of Hammurabi, which dates from the eighteenth century B.C., and the modern law code of the Republic of Egypt are both found here. This important repository houses as well tomes on Islamic law, such as the massive six-volume collection of Ḥanafī Muslim laws and legal interpretations, *al-Fatāwā al-‘Alamgīrīyah* (1850), and collections of the canon law and acts of the councils of all the Christian churches of the East, such as the Armenian *Kanonagirk’ Hayots’* (The Book of Canons).

The rapid and cursory glance through the Library’s visual and intellectual treasures that follows will suggest how these materials document the complex life of the Middle East from remote antiquity to contemporary times.

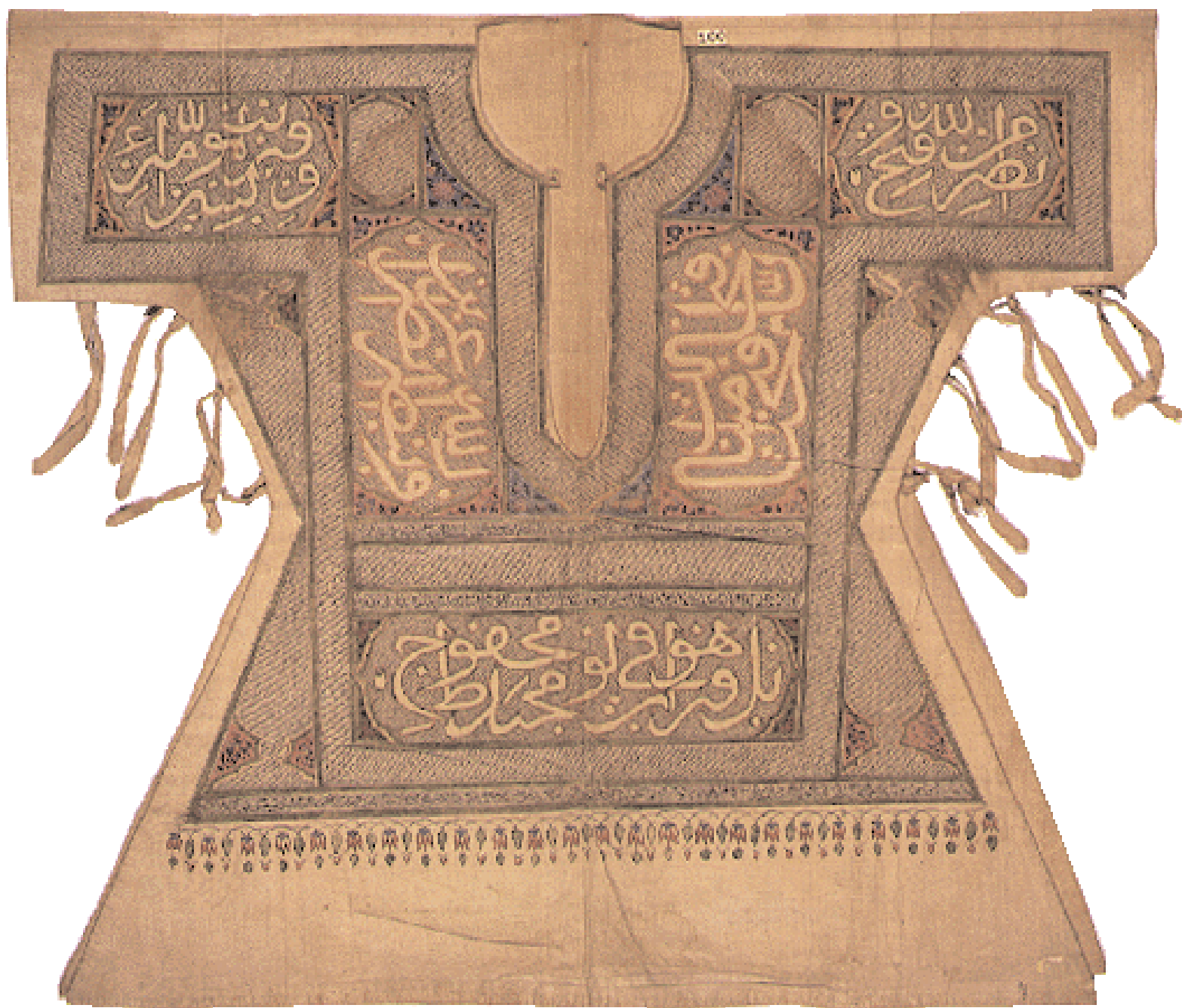
LEVON AVDOYAN

ARMENIAN AND GEORGIAN AREA SPECIALIST, NEAR EAST SECTION

Near East Collections was written by Levon Avdoyan, Armenian and Georgian area specialist in the Near East Section, under the general guidance of Beverly Gray, chief of the African and Middle Eastern Division, with the collegiality of the authors of the guides to the African and Hebraic collections, Joanne Zellers and Michael Grunberger, respectively, and the expertise and assistance of the talented specialists of the Near East Section: Mary Jane Deeb, George Selim, and Fawzi Tadros (Arabica); Christopher Murphy (Turcica); and Ibrahim Pourhadi (Iranica). Special thanks to Sarah Ozturk and Kay Ritchie, of the Middle East/North Africa cataloging team, for their knowledgeable suggestions, to Jim Higgins of the Photoduplication Services for his skill and adaptability, and to Evelyn Sinclair of the Publishing Office for her insightful and valuable editorial advice.



Jewish emigration from Georgia within the last three decades has created a thriving and influential community in the state of Israel. Contemporary author and poet Itzhak David's *Lamazi k'ristiani gogo up'lis sap'lavt'an* (The beautiful Christian girl at the Lord's tomb) is a fine example of Georgian publications from Jerusalem. (Reproduced with permission of Itzhak David) (Near East Section)



The Middle East and Religion

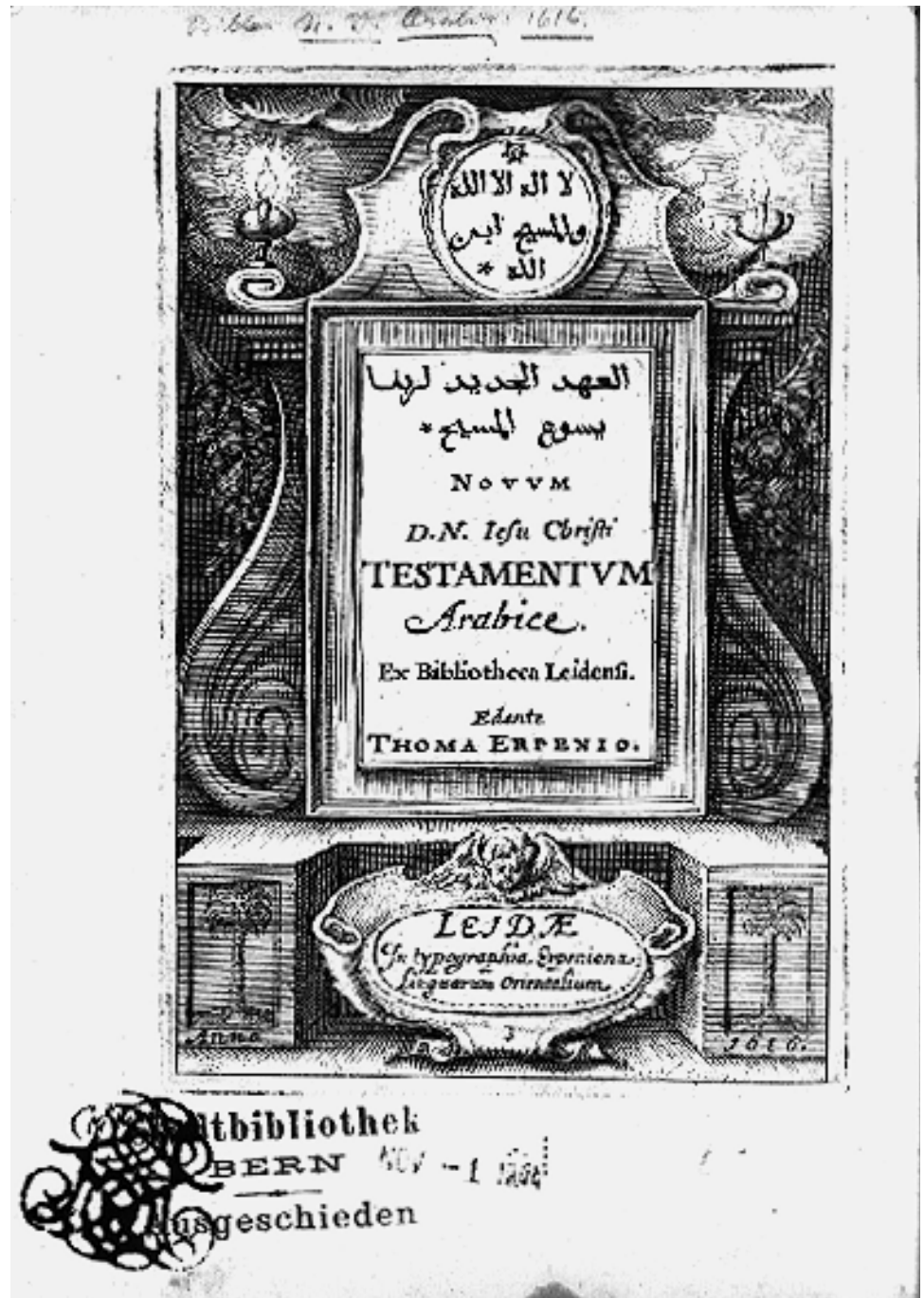
TO OVEREMPHASIZE THE ROLE that religious beliefs have played in all aspects of Middle Eastern society and culture is impossible. Three of the world's major religions, as well as smaller sects that continue to exist today, arose from these lands. Up to modern times in the Near East, religion and politics were inseparable, and to some extent this is still true today. For the majority of these peoples, their primary identity has been religious. People thought of themselves first as Muslims, Christians, Jews, or Zoroastrians, and second as a member of some ethnicity or as an inhabitant of a specific locality. This primary identification with religion had the deepest of roots, extending back to the most ancient Mesopotamian states. During the Sasanian dynasty of Persia (A.D. 224–636), the system of separate religious communities, governed by their own religious leaders under the authority of the king of kings, was crystallized. This religious and political identification was paralleled at roughly the same time in the Greek orthodoxy of the Byzantine Empire. In the seventh century A.D., when the Sasanian Empire fell to the Arabs, the empire's administrative structure lived on in the Islamic concept of *Ahl al-Kitāb* (People of the Book). *Ahl al-Kitāb* embraced those religions based on earlier revelation, particularly Christianity and Judaism. Its system and structures were adopted by succeeding Muslim rulers and have continued until this century.

It is not surprising, then, that materials concerning religion form approximately 20 percent of the holdings of the Near East Section. Preeminent among them are the many manuscripts and calligraphy sheets in Arabic, publications and translations of the Islamic holy book, the Koran, and religious artifacts. Although principally Islamic and Christian, important works in the Library's collections relate to other religions, such as Zoroastrianism, that originated in the Middle East. The Hebraic Section maintains custody of all Hebraic, Amharic, Syriac, and Coptic religious texts.

Today, as in the past, Christians continue to form a significant portion of the populations of Near Eastern countries, which explains the Near East Section's extensive collection of publications and manuscripts produced chiefly by Arab, Armenian, and Georgian Christians. Christian communities encouraged contact with their brethren in the East and contributed to the vast literature of travel reports and religious tracts that began in the Middle Ages. The Library's General Collections and particularly the Rare Book and Special Collections Division possess many fine examples of this genre.

Soon after the creation in the West of movable type in the Renaissance, connections between West and East stimulated Europeans to print works in

OPPOSITE. Inscribed with much of the text of the Koran, this eighteenth-century linen Shiite Muslim battle tunic, most probably from Iran or southern Iraq, also bears inscriptions in praise of the prophet Muḥammad and of his son-in-law, 'Alī. It is eloquent testimony to the place of religious commitment in all aspects of life in the Islamic world. Across the shoulders is inscribed verse 13 of *Sūrah 61* ("al Saff," or Battle array): "Help from God and a speedy Victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers." (*Near East Section*)



Early European Arabic imprints focused on the religious diversity, both Islamic and Christian, in the Arab world. Pictured are the title pages of Thomas Erpenio's *Testamentum Arabice* (Arabic New Testament) (Leiden, 1616) and of *Al-Coranus* (The Koran) (Hamburg, 1694). (Near East Section)

AL-CORANUS
S.
LEX ISLAMITICA
MUHAM-
MEDIS,
FILII ABDALLÆ
Pseudoprophetæ,

Ad optimorum Codicum fidem edita

ex Museo

ABRAHAMI HINCKELMANNI, D.

— — — — —

HAMBURGI,

Ex Officina SCHULTZIO-SCHILLERIANA,

ANNO 1694.



Arabic and then in the other vernacular scripts and languages of the Near East. The creation of important dictionaries, such as Meninski's *Lexicon Arabico-Persico-Turcicum* (Arabic-Persian-Turkish Dictionary) (Vienna, 1780), soon followed, as did vernacular editions and translations of the classics of Islamic and Near Eastern cultures, such as al-Ṭūsī's *Tahrīr usūl li-Uqlīdis* on Euclidian geometry or Ibn Sīnā's (Avicenna, 980–1037) *al-Qānūn* (Canon). Later, as American and European missionaries and European colonial administrators started to create educational institutions on the European model, new presses, both in the Near East and in the homelands of missionaries and colonial administrators, began to print works in vernacular scripts.

Parallel to these technological developments, Islamic civilization, based solidly on religion and yet expanding to form a social, cultural, economic, and political synthesis under the first Islamic empire in the seventh century A.D., evolved into the present multidisciplinary culture, whose immense depth and breadth we only now recognize. This intellectually staggering breadth of achievement undergirds much of what is the Near East Collection. Always created with a religious consciousness, the literary heritage and modern compositions of these multifaceted modern countries make up the collections and charge of the Near East Section.

The Kirkor Minassian collection, acquired by the Library in the 1920s and 1930s, included this remnant of an inscribed seventeenth-century Armenian ecclesiastical garment of red velvet, which is jeweled and richly embroidered with gold and multicolored threads and testifies to the wealth of its clerical owner and of his diocese. (*Near East Section*)

The Arab World

IN TERMS OF SHEER NUMBER OF ITEMS, pride of place in the section must go to the immensely influential Arabic-language collection, although defining its scope narrowly by language obscures its brilliance and diversity. Representative of the intellectual heritage of twenty-two modern Arab countries of North Africa and the Middle East, it extends to publications and manuscripts in Arabic from many non-Middle Eastern countries to which Islam's roots spread long ago.

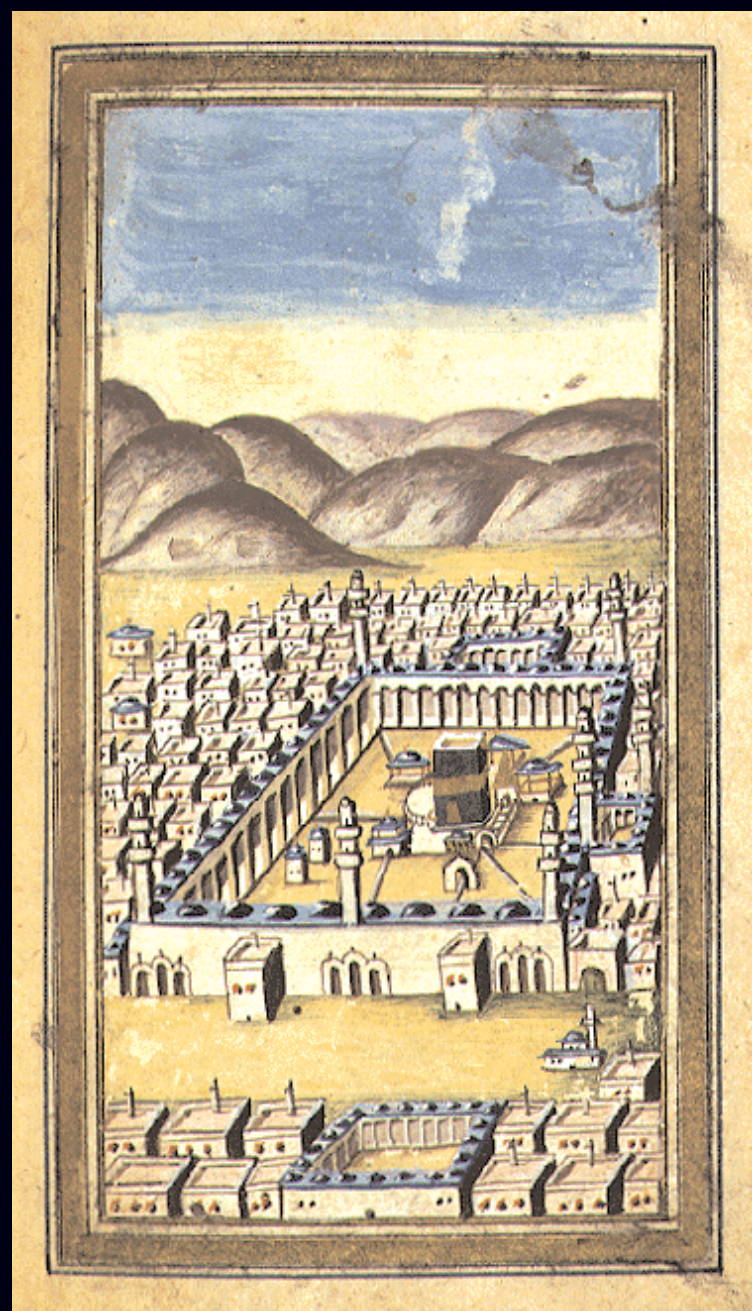
The Arab people have been known for millennia in the lands of the Middle East. Mentioned in monuments of the ancient Assyrians and Persians, they first grew prominent in the early days of the Roman Empire. The lost pink city of Petra, now in Jordan, was capital to the wealthy and important Arab Nabataeans. Palmyra, the Arabized rival to Rome, and its exotic queen Zenobia stirred the imagination of Roman historians. Arab merchants and travelers dominated the trade routes well before the Prophet's time.

The year A.D. 622, marking the Hijrah, was one of the true watersheds in the history of the Middle East. In that year the Prophet Muḥammad fled from Mecca with his followers to the welcoming city of Medina. Revelation came to the Prophet at the same time his conquests grew in number and in A.D. 630 he took Mecca. Muḥammad's triumphant return accelerated the Islamization of the entire Arabian Peninsula. By A.D. 640, Syria, Iraq, and Persia had been subdued. By the year 732, exactly one hundred years after the death of the Prophet, Egypt, Nubia, all North Africa, Spain, and Southern France, as well as much of Anatolia, were either directly in Muslim hands or under the influence of Islam. In all its facets, Islam had triumphed and was firmly rooted in the Near East. From A.D. 644 to 656 the third caliph, Uthman, compiled the text of the Koran, the Word of God, revealed to the Prophet through the angel Gabriel. The era of monumental literature composed in Arabic had begun.

Although much of the Arabic-language collection of monographs, newspapers, manuscripts, and microfilms is concerned with Islam in all its manifestations, the collection's scope is by no means limited to religious matters. Its balance of subjects and chronological range include contemporary Arab life in all its facets.

The Library has made a point of collecting manuscripts, early publications, and the literary products of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century authors, historians, and political leaders from the entire Islamic world. Early imprints from Europe include a *Psalms of David* (Rome, 1614), Erpenio's *Testamentum Arabice* (Arabic New Testament) (Rome, 1616), and *al-Coranus* (The Koran) (Hamburg, 1694). From Calcutta, India comes al-Shirwani's *al-ʿAjab al-ʿujab fī mā yufidu al-kuttāb*

OPPOSITE. Two of the holiest of sites for Islam, today still revered places of pilgrimage, are Medina, from which the Prophet Muḥammad fled, and the *Ka'bah* in Mecca, the sanctuary to which Muslims turn in prayer and to which they go on pilgrimage. These shrines are illustrated in this 1718 manuscript of Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Jazūlī's (Morocco, d. 1465) *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* (Signs of blessing). (Near East Section)



سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ

لَسْتَ بِاللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ
إِنَّا كُنَّا
نَعْبُدُكَ إِنَّا كُنَّا
الْمُسْتَقِيمِينَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ



LEFT TOP. Copied in exquisite *Thuluth* script and complemented by spare rondels of gold, this fifteenth-century manuscript is opened to the text of *al-Burdah* (The mantle), by Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd al-Būṣīrī (Upper Egypt, 1213–95). The poem, a panegyric to the Prophet Muḥammad, reads, in part: “Oh, noblest of mankind! I have none but you with whom to seek refuge when doomsday comes.” (*Near East Section*)



LEFT BOTTOM. The various artistic, literary, and calligraphic traditions of the Islamic world have continued into the present century, demonstrating continuity as well as originality. This splendid amalgam of pictorial art and the poetry of Fadwā Ṭūqān, published in 1990, is a visual tour de force of calligraphy and painting by the contemporary, internationally known artist Diyāʾ al-ʿAzzāwī. (*Near East Section*) (*Reproduced with permission of Diyāʾ al-ʿAzzāwī*)

OPPOSITE. “Al-Fātiḥah,” the opening chapter of the Koran, is here depicted in an ornamented fragment from an early, as yet undated manuscript. (*Near East Section, housed in the Conservation Office*)

RIGHT. This eleventh-century manuscript on vellum of verses 73–78 of Sūrah 28 (“al-Qaṣaṣ,” or The narration) of the Koran is a striking example of *Kūfī* script. The text reads: “Seek, with which God has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter. Nor forget thy portion in this World; but do thou good, as God has been good to thee. Seek not mischief in the land; for God loves not those who do mischief.” (*Near East Section*)

OPPOSITE TOP. The brilliance of the early Arabic literary tradition often transcended the merely religious. Inheritors of the classical Mediterranean tradition, the Arab intelligentsia not only translated important texts of classical antiquity, they also astutely commented on influential works spanning a multitude of disciplines. Depicted is a thirteenth-century manuscript of *Sharḥ fuṣūl Abiqrāt* (The aphorisms of Hippocrates) with commentary by the eleventh-century Arab physician ‘Abd al-‘Raḥmān ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṣādiq. (*Near East Section*)

OPPOSITE BOTTOM. Arab scientists and physicians, often more advanced than their European counterparts, were important not only for the traditions they transmitted but also for their own unique and important contributions to the sciences. Witnesses to this are the first two pages of a manuscript, copied on March 24, 1497, of *al-Adwiyah al-ma‘rufah al-musta‘malah* (Known and used medications) by Najīb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Samarqandī (d. A.D. 1222). (*Near East Section*)



(The wonder of wonders to benefit writers) (1845), and from Aleppo, Syria, the second or third Arabic book published in movable type by Arabs in the Middle East, *Kitāb al-Injil al-Sharīf al-Tāhir* (The Holy Gospel) (1706).

The international renown of the section’s Arabic manuscript collection has also grown in the time since 1945, when the collection of approximately 1,300 manuscripts and 3,700 books assembled by Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Imām al-Manṣūrī, professor of religion at the al-Azhar University in Cairo, was purchased by the Library of Congress. These supplemented the manuscripts and other precious items that had been acquired in the 1920s and 1930s from the New York art dealer and authority on Near Eastern manuscripts, Kirkor Minassian, whose collection was especially rich in Islamic materials, prized among which are a Koran written in *Kūfī*, the earliest of Arabic scripts, from the eleventh century and an extraordinarily executed manuscript cautiously attributed by some scholars to the father of Turkish calligraphy, Shaykh Ḥamdullah (A.D. 1437–1520). Nor is the Minassian collection restricted to things religious. Arab intellectuals, inheritors of the ancient received tradition, were responsible for the translation of, commentary on, and cultural transmission of innumerable classics of antiquity, many of which exist thanks only to their efforts. The collection thus consists of valuable historical, scientific, and literary manuscripts as well, some with exquisite illuminations.

Arabic serials, numbering in the hundreds, underscore the utility of the Arabic collection as a whole. They contain information on virtually every subject needed by scholars and researchers of the Middle East, while at the same time they cover the most recent developments in the Arab world. The Library’s collection of literary and political materials is counted among the world’s finest. Examples of some historical serials collected are: *al-Muqtaṭaf*, (Lebanon/Egypt, 1876–1952); *al-Hawādith* (Tripoli, Lebanon, 1911–); *al-Da‘wah* (Egypt, 1906–49); and the most important periodical for Sunni Orthodox Islam, *al-Azhar* (Egypt, 1935–present).

The section focuses as well on the acquisition of magazines, journals, and

The astronomical and astrological sciences played a vital role in the life of the Middle East from remote antiquity up to, in many ways, the present. The constellation Draco, the Dragon, slithers across a page of the work of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Umar al-Šūfi’ (Iraq, d. A.D. 986) entitled *Šuwar al-kawākib* (The depictions of [celestial] constellations). The table on the left-hand page of the manuscript, copied in A.D. 1417, names and locates the various constellations. (*Near East Section*)

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١١١
صورة الثنين على ما يرى في السماء
الكره





ABOVE. Title page of volume 1 of the influential Lebanese/Egyptian journal *al-Muqtataf*. (Near East Section)

OPPOSITE TOP. Arabic calligraphy has long been recognized for its subtle beauty and expressiveness. An example of the Near East Section's major collection of these prized creations is this sparsely yet richly decorated example in *Ta'liq* script from Persia, the text of which provides the rationale for its obvious artistic merit: "He who writes in beautiful calligraphy *In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate* enters paradise without judgment." (Near East Section)

OPPOSITE BOTTOM. The cover of one of the seventy-two compact disks that form the anthology of *nawbas* titled *Anthologie al-Āla: musique andaluci-marocaine*. (Music Division)

newspapers from prominent Arab communities in Europe. These mushroomed during and after the Lebanese war of 1975–76, and include *al-Mustaqbal* (1977–89); *al-Waṭan al-ʿArabī* (1977–present); and *al-Bāʿith* (1978–present).

Mere possession of these vital documents is not enough. A much-needed program was initiated by the Near East Section in 1968 especially to ensure their preservation. To date, well over one hundred newspapers have been filmed thanks to this effort, thus guaranteeing their continued availability to researchers both now and in the future.

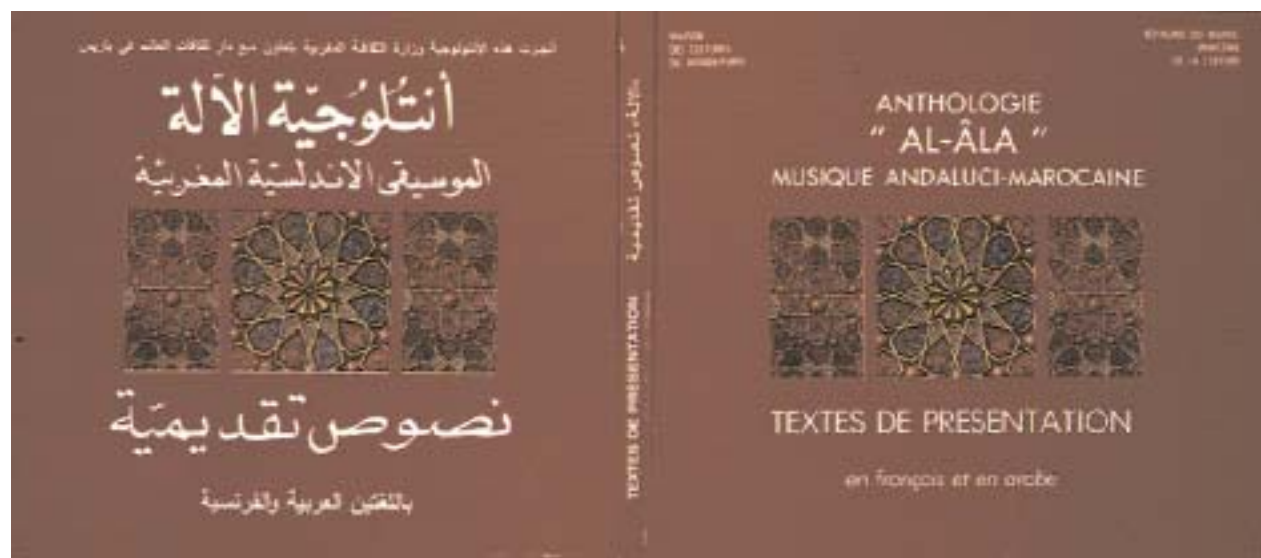
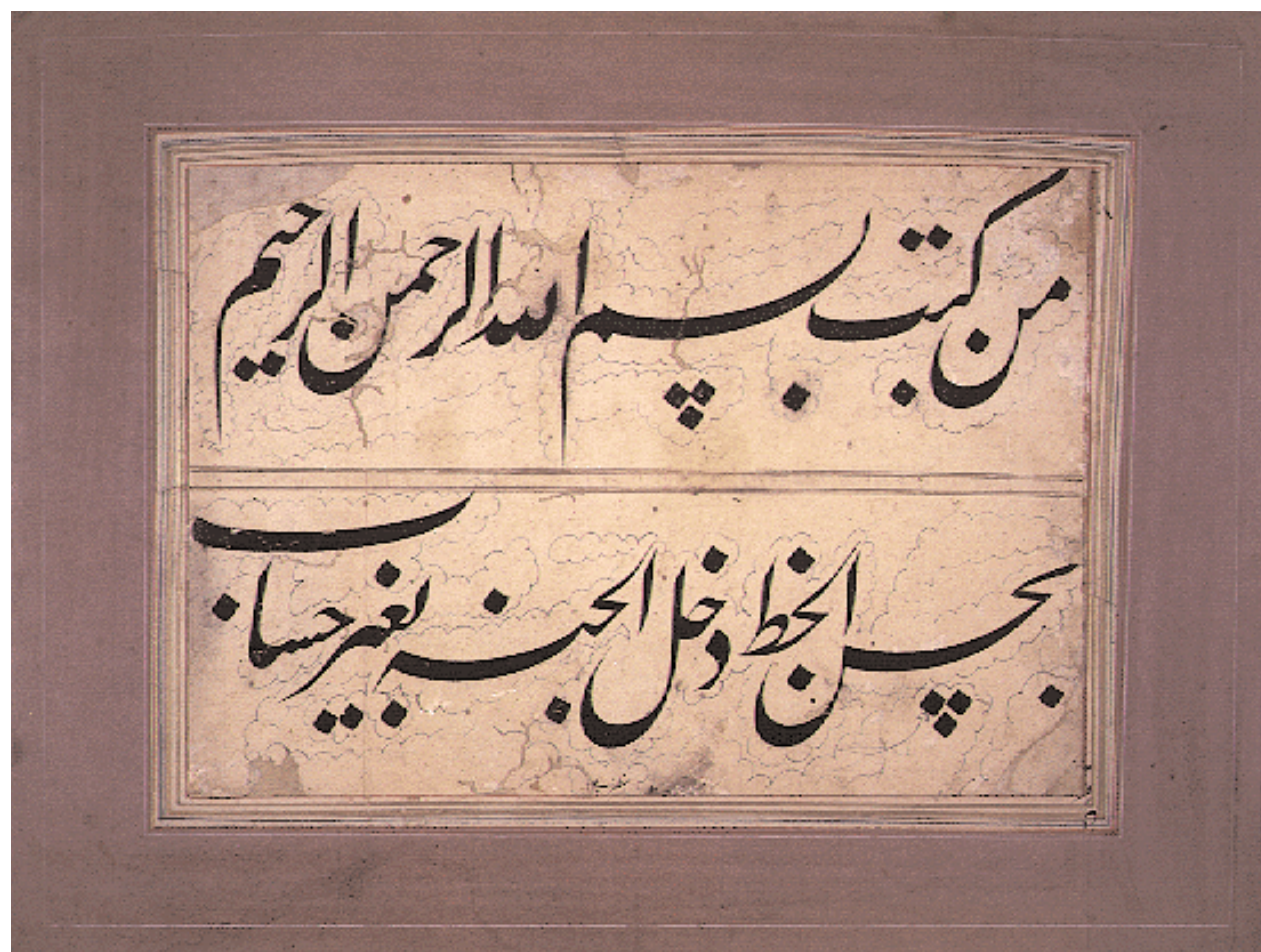
The section also boasts about two hundred magnificent Arabic calligraphy sheets, among which are fragments of the Koran in the Kūfī script of the ninth and tenth centuries, exquisite Islamic bookbindings, and priceless articles such as a linen tunic from the Islamic world covered with the text of the Koran written on its front and back meant for a warrior to wear under his armor.

Researchers into the Arab world have at their disposal many essential nonvernacular collections of supplemental materials. Among these are antique and modern maps in the Geography and Map Division, legal materials and works relating to law and Islam in the Law Library, and photographic collections in the Prints and Photographs Division. The Arab and Islamic musical traditions are well represented in the Music Division, which recently acquired the Arabic sound recording of an anthology of *nawbas* (suites) presented as a gift by the Moroccan government.

The Manuscript Division provides many important collections for our researchers. For example, the Arabic, English, and French personal papers of the Lebanese academic, philosopher, author, and diplomat Charles Habib Malik (1906–87) as well as the English manuscripts and correspondence of Ameen Rihani (1876–1940), one of the most prominent Arab-American writers and poets, are to be found there.

Of special note is the Library's attempt to record and preserve the voices and works of contemporary Arab poets and authors as part of its *Archive of World Literature on Tape*. Among those recorded reading their poetry are the Egyptian poet Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣʿabūr (1931–81), Nobel prize laureate Najīb Maḥfūz (1912–), and the contemporary author Ṭibah Aḥmad al-Ibrāhīm, a Kuwaiti woman. These are available for study by researchers in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division.

Taken in its entirety, the Arabic collection and Arabica in the Library of Congress combine to create a celebration and a commemoration of the culture of the Middle East as a whole.





Armenia and Georgia

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE of the Indo-European Armenians and the Kartvelian Georgians from remote antiquity to the present is the province of the Near East Section. Although linguistically different, these two peoples share a measure of common ancestry. They have also been neighbors for millennia. This and the fact that since the seventh century A.D. they are unique to the Middle East by being Christian states in an Islamic milieu make it natural that materials in their respective languages should be maintained together.

Georgia, stretching from the verdant Caucasus Mountains in the north to the Kura River in the south, and Armenia, from the lesser Caucasus mountains in the north through the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the south, have been witness to the appearance and disappearance of a host of peoples throughout the ages, all of whom both influenced the Armenians and Georgians and were influenced by them. They included Hittites and Urartians; Persians; Greeks; the Romans and Parthians; Turks and Mongols; and Russians and Europeans. All passed through these land bridges between north and south and east and west. To study the literary, historical, and cultural records of Armenia and Georgia is to cast your net into the sea of all these people. Vital to understanding these lands is knowledge that all Armenian and Georgian literature is essentially Christian literature. Both alphabets were created in the fifth century A.D. chiefly as vehicles to propagate the Christian faith. Much of the Near East collections, then, have to do with Christianity and with the Armenian and Georgian churches.

After centuries of partition, division, and conquest, the northeastern portion of Armenia, scarcely a tenth of its historical breadth, and the whole of Georgia in the 1920s became Soviet republics. This accounted for an explosion of publications from the Soviet educational and academic institutions, now well represented in the section's collections. When both these ancient lands achieved independence in 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, they enjoyed a sense of freedom of expression that resulted in the 1990s in a burst of publications of various genres.

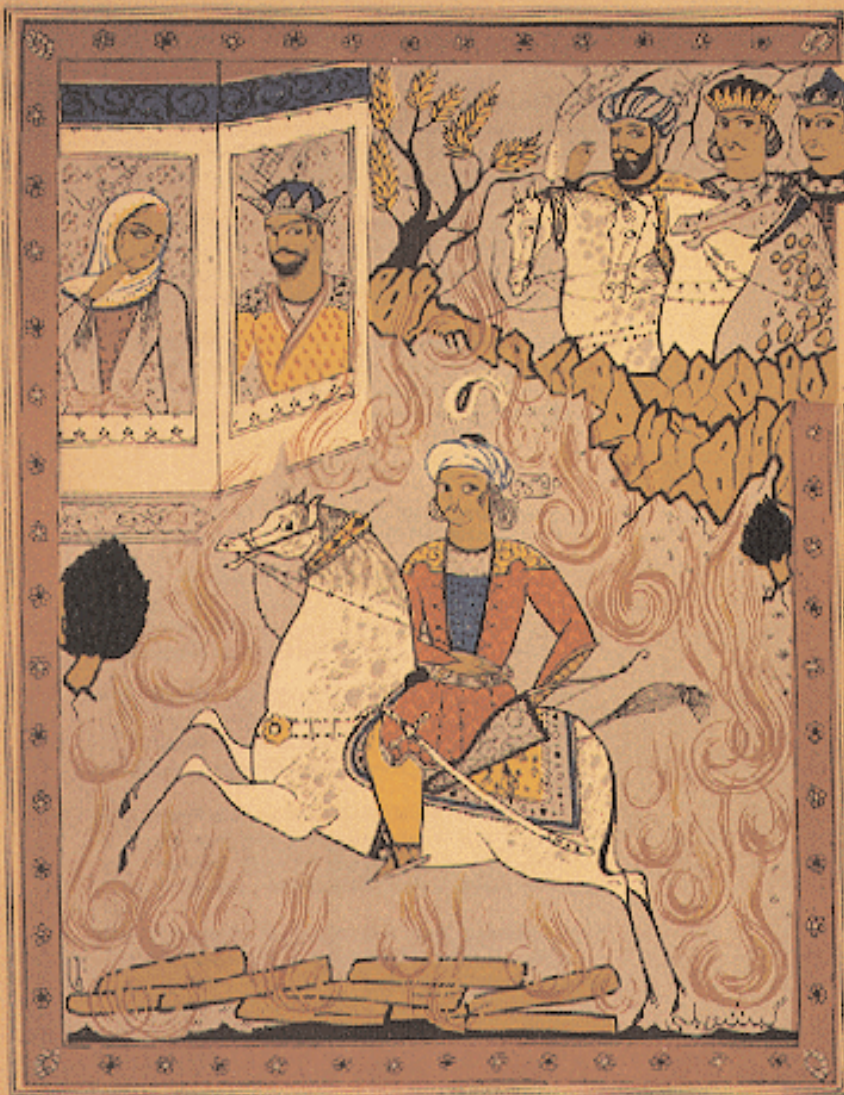
Western books about Armenia and Georgia have been found in the Library's General Collections from the nineteenth century. Histories, grammars, travelogues, archaeological collections, and editions and translations of Christian texts are there and in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Yet at the time of the creation of the Near East Section, the Library had scarcely 200 Armenian-language books and even fewer Georgian-language works. In the late 1940s, Arthur Dadian, an American of Armenian descent living in Washington, D.C., created with the approval of Luther Evans, Librarian of Congress, the Committee for the Armenian Collection of the Library of Congress, expressly to help the Library in

OPPOSITE. The West's need and desire for knowledge of the countries of the Caucasus provided a market for numerous published travel accounts and maps. This *Carte de la Géorgie et des pays situés entre la Mer Noire et la Mer Caspienne*, published in Venice in 1775 by Joseph Nicolas de l'Isle, depicts not only Georgia with all its internal ethnic complexities, but also Armenia, among the myriad lesser- and better-known countries and ethnicities in eighteenth-century Anatolia and the Caucasus. (*Geography and Map Division*).



acquiring Armenian-language materials in all fields of study. The committee was so successful that in 1959 the section hired a specialist to guide these efforts.

In 1991, Arthur Dadian's widow, Marjorie Dadian, created an endowment from the estate of her husband for the growth and maintenance of the Library's Armenian collections. This original bequest was supplemented by one from her own estate in 1997. Both were extremely generous and support acquisitions, programs, and successor staff specialists to continue the Library's efforts on behalf of Armenian materials. Matching appropriated funds supported for the first time the systematic acquisition of Georgian materials, guided by that same specialist.



FAR OPPOSITE. This 1825 collection of *T'ugbt' ėndbanarakan* (Encyclical letters) of St. Nersēs Shnorhali (ca. 1100–1173), Armenian *katholikos* and poet, is a splendid example of the important Constantinopolitan tradition in early Armenian book publishing. The renowned and revered ecclesiastic is pointedly portrayed towering over his devoted clerics. (*Near East Section*)

NEAR OPPOSITE. Published in St. Petersburg in 1882, this beautifully lithographed *Sak'artvelos Samot'xe* (*The garden/paradise of Georgia*) provides biographies of important Georgian Orthodox Christian saints. Although the text is printed in the common *mxdruili* (military) script, the depiction of St. Evstati of Mc'xet'a, the medieval capital of Georgia, shown in the background, is identified using the older, *xuc'uri* (priestly) uncials. (*Near East Section*)

LEFT. A scene from the Persian classical author Firdawsī's *Shahnamah* (Book of kings). The popular and influential work was translated into Georgian and published in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 1934, in celebration of the 1,000th anniversary of its creation. (*Near East Section*)

RIGHT. Commentary by Hakob, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, on the prayers and laments of St. Grigor Narekatsi'i (ca. 951–1003), Armenian mystical poet, was published in 1745 in Istanbul. The lithographs depict scenes from the saint's life and, together with the various decorative devices throughout, exhibit both a European style and the major influence that the artistic conventions of the Armenian manuscript tradition exerted on early Armenian imprints. (*Near East Section*)

OPPOSITE TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT. A full-page illumination of the crucifixion of Christ and an identifiably Armenian ornamented title page open this illuminated manuscript, copied in 1722. The text is a missal designed to be used by the priest (bottom left), who is shown in marginalia throughout the text celebrating the divine liturgy.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT. Peacocks often were depicted in illuminations of medieval Armenian manuscripts. This brightly colored example is one of many artistic devices placed in the margins of another missal, also copied in 1722 and owned by the Library. (*Near East Section*)





Several medieval and early modern Armenian manuscripts grace the collection, from an important fourteenth-century tetraevangile and two eighteenth-century profusely and elegantly illustrated missals to several ornate seventeenth-century calligraphy sheets. The modern era is represented by a fourteen-volume diary meticulously handwritten by the twentieth-century Armenian American David Atamian. Atamian's memoirs provide moving and important narration of the Armenian massacres of 1915 and of the author's journey to America as well as the tale of his ultimate Americanization.

Although the Armenians were among the first Middle Easterners to adopt movable type (the first book printed in Armenian script dates to 1511) the Library's earliest Armenian works date from the early 1700s and come from the influential presses of Istanbul, seat of the Ottoman Armenian Patriarchate, and Ējmiatsin, home of the *Katholikos* of All Armenians, the head of the Armenian Church. It is, however, from the centuries-old Armenian diaspora that the great number of these early works spring. The Armenian Catholic Mekhitarist monasteries at Vienna and Venice began extensive publication activity in the eighteenth century, and publications from presses and publishing houses in India, Russia, Iran, Jerusalem, and the Arab world in general account for a significant part of the section's collections.

Together with Armenian-language works published in Europe, the Armenian collection is rich in pre-Soviet and Soviet-era academic monographs and serials, and the Georgian contains a significant number of Soviet-era works. Supplementing the Library's vast collection of Western periodicals, the section continues its efforts to acquire historical newspapers and to maintain complete sets of many contemporary Armenian and Georgian serials, such as the indispensable *Patma-banasirakan bandes* (Historico-Philological Review) (Yerevan, 1958–present).

The custodial Georgian and Armenian collections include representative publications from the various diasporan communities around the world, whether in other countries of the Middle East or in Asia, Europe, or the United States. Newsletters and newspapers are gathered and maintained as primary documents of the contemporary experience. The section has taken advantage of the burst of publishing activity that followed the independence of both republics in 1991 to acquire monographs and ephemera to document the birth and growth of democracy in these ancient lands. *Hayastani Hanrapetut'yun*, the state newspaper from Yerevan, Armenia, and *Sak'artvelos Respublika*, its analog from Tbilisi, Georgia, are among the most important contemporary documents in the section's constantly growing collections. These are augmented by the burgeoning number of electronic

OPPOSITE. A scene of comparative calm from the Georgian national epic, *Vep'xistqaosani* (The knight in the panther skin) by the beloved medieval poet Shota Rustaveli (fl. 1190). This 1987 edition testifies to the enduring appeal for the Georgian people of this sublime work. (Near East Section)





VIEW OF ST. GERASIMOS MONASTERY IN MOUNT
ATHOS, MOUNT ATHOS, GREECE



VARTAN A. HAMPIKIAN
New York



LEFT AND OPPOSITE. The Armenian Monastery of Surb Karapet (the Holy Precursor, St. John the Baptist) in Mush, Turkey, constructed in the tenth century, was at the dawn of the twentieth century one of the three most important sites for Armenian Christian pilgrimage. Although this magnificent example of Armenian architecture was destroyed to its foundations in 1915, these two photographic views, deposited for registration in the U.S. Copyright Office in 1923 by Vartan A. Hampikian, attest to its original splendor and are, thus, of enormous value to scholars. (*Prints and Photographs Division*)

news reports emanating from Armenia and Georgia through the Internet, which are available to researchers as well.

Multivolume microfilm collections found in the Microform Reading Room dovetail with the vernacular collections in the Near East Section. These include *Armenian Architecture*; *Georgian Architecture*; three volumes of rare nineteenth-century works; *Armenian Sources*; and *Manuscripts from the Armenian and Greek Patriarchates of Jerusalem*. Rare photographs in the Prints and Photographs Division; papers and letters of such statesmen as Ambassador Henry Morgenthau Sr. (1856–1946); or of missionaries such as William Goodell (1792–1867) in the Manuscript Division; musical scores and anthologies of both classical and folk music in the Performing Arts Reading Room; and recordings of European-style operas, such as *Anush* by the nineteenth-century Armenian composer Armen Tigranyan, also offer insights into the history and culture of these ancient peoples of the Caucasus.

These vernacular and nonvernacular collections together form the basis of a major research center for the study of Armenia and Georgia in particular, as well as many other peoples of the Caucasus.

Central Asia

THE LANDS WHICH STRETCH from the Eastern Caucasus mountains across the Caspian Sea and beyond the steppes of Central Asia have long fascinated the Western world. Encompassing transit points between East and West—for commerce, migration, and war—and peopled by a myriad of Turkic and Iranian tribes, as well as other races and ethnicities, the region is full of wild mountainous vistas and extensive monotonous plains. Nonetheless, enduring centers created here have long stirred the imagination. Sheherazade's thousand and one exotic nights were passed, it should not be forgotten, in the magical Central Asian city of Samarkand.

The turbulent history of this area together with that of the various groups populating the Crimea on the northern shores of the Pontus climaxed inexorably in the Russian conquests of the nineteenth century and led just as certainly to the eventual status of these groups as Soviet republics and tributaries. Now, newly independent after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the lands that form Central Asia are the Iranian Tajikistan and the Turkic Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tashkent, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Although the Crimea and north Caucasus have been retained as part of Russia—the administrative and ethnic lands of the Ossetes, the Tatars of the Crimea, and Yakuts, for instance—the section also preserves their vernacular materials. Linguistically over twenty-four distinct languages are included in the section's vernacular materials from the area.

The General Collections and the Rare Book and Special Collections Division house many early Western works on the region, from the familiar travelogue to early histories of Islamic regimes, mercantile documents, and political discourses. Gradually, nineteenth-century Russian and European academic publications, such as the highly regarded French *Journal asiatique*, began to include studies of these many and varied peoples. These publications took on greater urgency in the Soviet period and produced sound critical scholarship. Particularly impressive was the *Zapiski* of the Institut Narodov Azii of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Serendipity often plays a role in uncovering rare or unique works from among the millions of items at the Library of Congress. Such a rarity is the multivolume *Turkestanskii Al'bom*, in the custody of the Prints and Photographs Division. Filled with ethnographic portraiture, architectural and archaeological photography, and architectural renderings and watercolors of Russian-held Central Asia, this priceless resource, which exists in only seven copies worldwide, was created by Konstantin Petrovich Von Kaufman, Russian governor-general of Turkestan from 1867 to 1882.

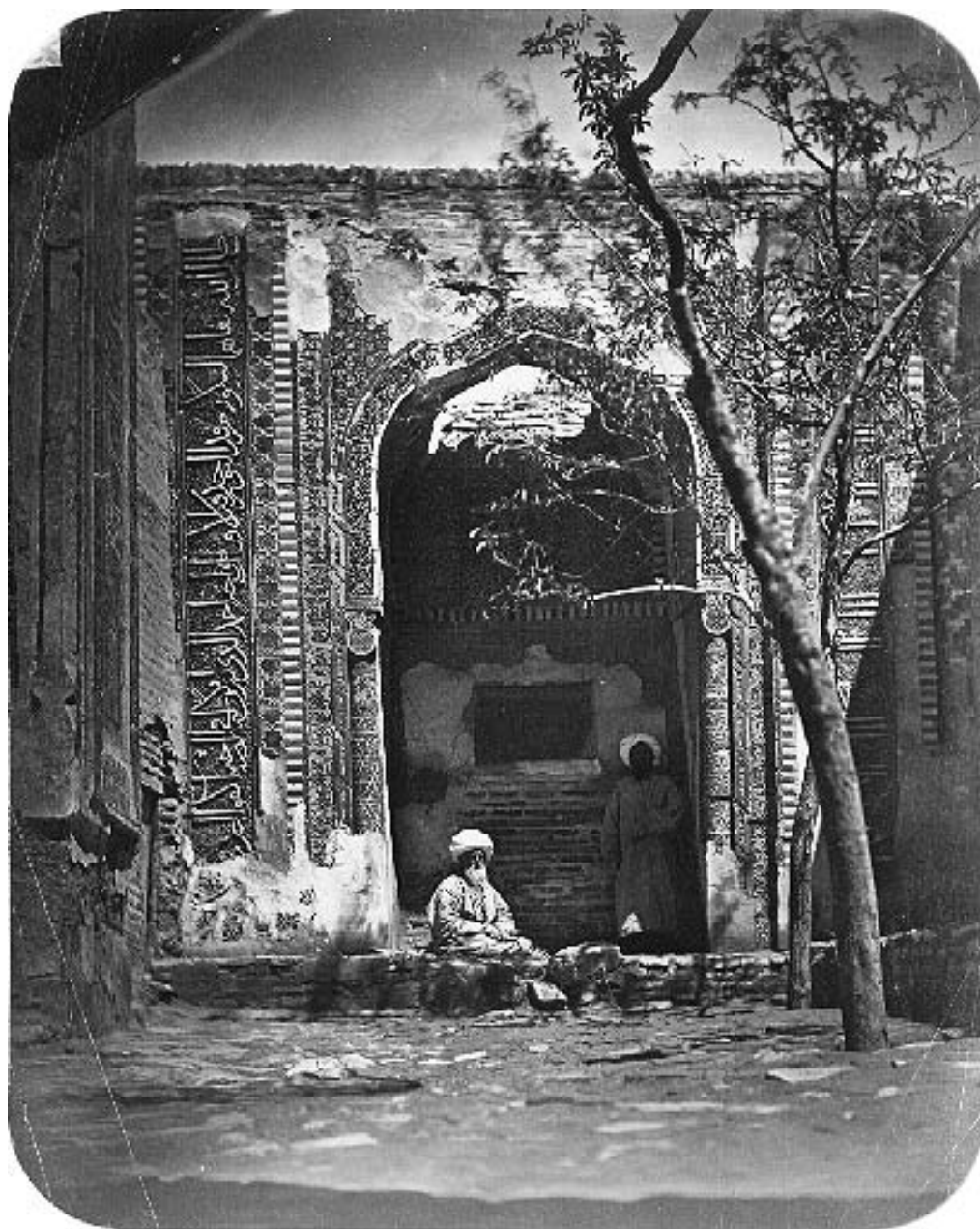
Book printing came to the Turkic and Iranian peoples of Central Asia only after the Russian conquest of the area. Yet by the beginning of the twentieth

OPPOSITE. This *Turkestanskii Al'bom* watercolor rendering of a detail from the mausoleum of Emir Abu-Tengi of Samarkand testifies to the richness of the monument. (Prints and Photographs Division)

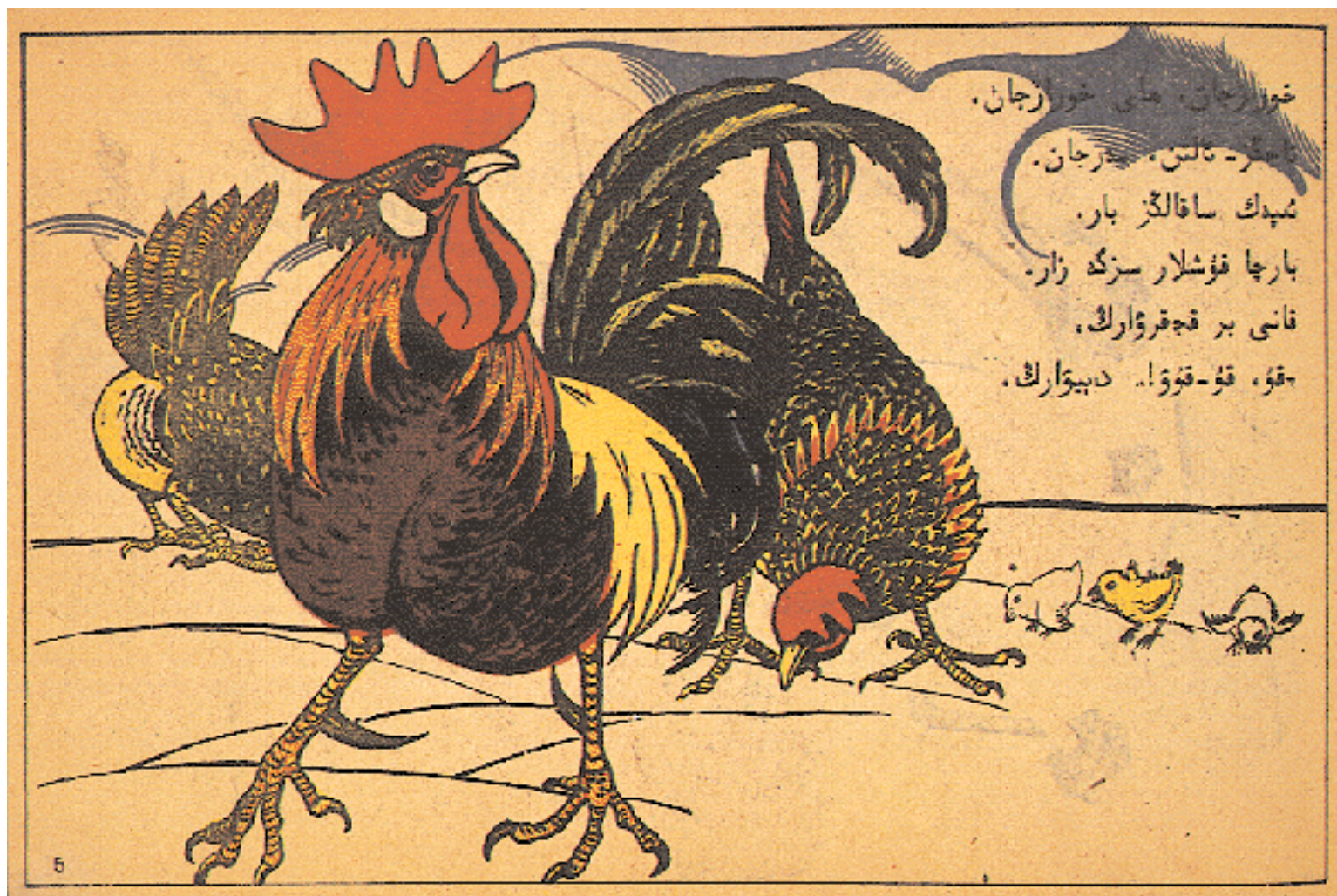




The images preserved in the extensive *Turkestanskii Al'bom* are both intrinsically sublime and useful to scholars. Khimet-Ai, a gracious Uzbek woman of obvious wealth, poses for the camera's approving lens, while the facade of the imposing Mausoleum of Akmed Hadji in Samarkand displays the importance of public architecture. The tent-like structures (in Russian, *kibitkas*) of the nomads of Turkestan, surrounded by their inhabitants' household animals, dot the grassy terrain. (*Prints and Photographs Division*)







Vividly colored cavorting chickens and rooster illustrate Elbek's *Hayvanlar*, one of the first children's books published in Tashkent and issued by the Uzbekistan

State Press in 1926. Written by a leading Uzbek author of that time, it indicates the emphasis placed on children's literacy during the Soviet period. (*Near East Section*)

century a number of presses were operating in Tashkent in two traditions. Following the Russian tradition, some presses used the post-*Kūfī Naskh* script in a type font developed during the eighteenth century at the behest of Catherine II of Russia. Others worked in the *Nasʿaliq* lithograph tradition imported from Iran. A particularly pleasing example of lithographed *Nasʿaliq* works is a copy of Zakariyā Qazwīnī's *ʿAjāʾib al-makblūqāt* (The wonders of creation) (Tashkent, 1917). In the Russian *Naskh* tradition are numerous works held in a separate collection of Muslim printed materials from the Russian Empire and Soviet Union dating from before 1946. Of note among these are a number of children's books printed in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and the Crimea. Sumptuously illustrated and printed on excellent paper, they are indicative of a new conception of childhood in the Muslim societies of the Soviet Union.

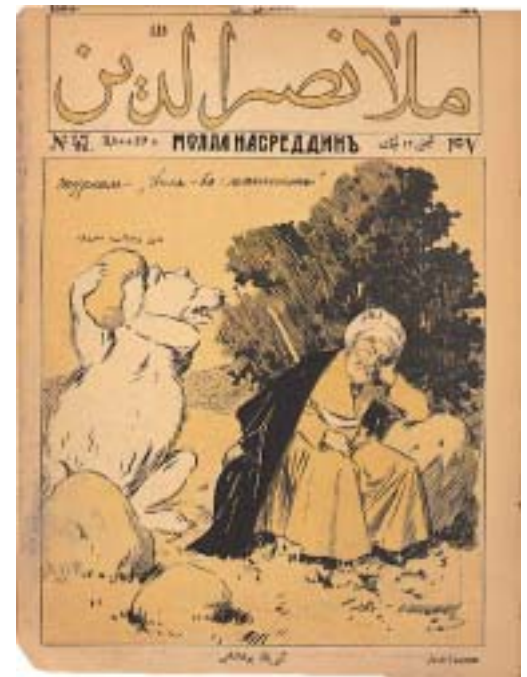
Although the collection is exceptionally rich in literature, studies on the history, language, art, and architecture of each of these republics are also well represented. An extensive collection of Central Asian publications from before and after independence includes priceless historical periodicals such as *Terjuman* (Bahchesaray, the Crimea, 1906–15) and the seminal satirical Azerbaijani journal *Molla Nasreddin* (Tiflis, 1906–17).

Adding to the value of the collection are Tajik, Uzbek, Tatar, and other encyclopedias, as well as the works of important authors such as Ali Shir Nevai (1441–1501) and the Uzbek, Abdullah Qahhar (1907–81).

Moreover, the section holds complete or nearly complete runs of serials published by the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union since 1955, and particularly since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Included among these are all the journals of the various writers' unions, such as *Sharq Yulduzi* (Tashkent) and *Zbulduz* (Alma Ata). Post-independence resurgence of nationalism and religious interests has led to as much publication as each country's economic and political circumstances allow.

The discovery of valuable resources and the growing alliances between business interests in the West and the governments of these new states have produced extensive economic, political, and cultural documentation of the societies, both in Western and in the vernacular languages. There is a growing interest in the burgeoning popular culture as well, as witnessed by the acquisitions of the popular literary works of Central Asia's contemporary authors.

What was a compact academic collection has emerged into one capable of supporting advanced multidisciplinary research. As democracy takes hold and economic and political alliances with the West evolve, the Near East Section fully intends to expand its collections of Central Asian materials proportionately.



The influential Azerbaijani-language *Molla Nasreddin*, the first satirical journal in the Russian Empire, was published in Tiflis/Tbilisi, Georgia, the administrative capital of Transcaucasia from 1905 to 1917, and targeted the educated Azerbaijani classes. The cover page of the November 22, 1909, issue compellingly details the internal fragmentation of Islam in the Russian Caucasus. (*Near East Section*)

The Iranian World

OPPOSITE. Combining the legends and epic literature of the pre-Iranian past with Islamic motifs, Firdawsī's *Shahnamah* (Book of kings) has remained since its creation an integral part of Iranian culture. This strikingly beautiful decorative device, which reflects a modern interpretation of the pre-Islamic tradition of geometric, floral, and foliar designs, is from the 1971 royal edition of the epic, published in Tehran. (Near East Section)

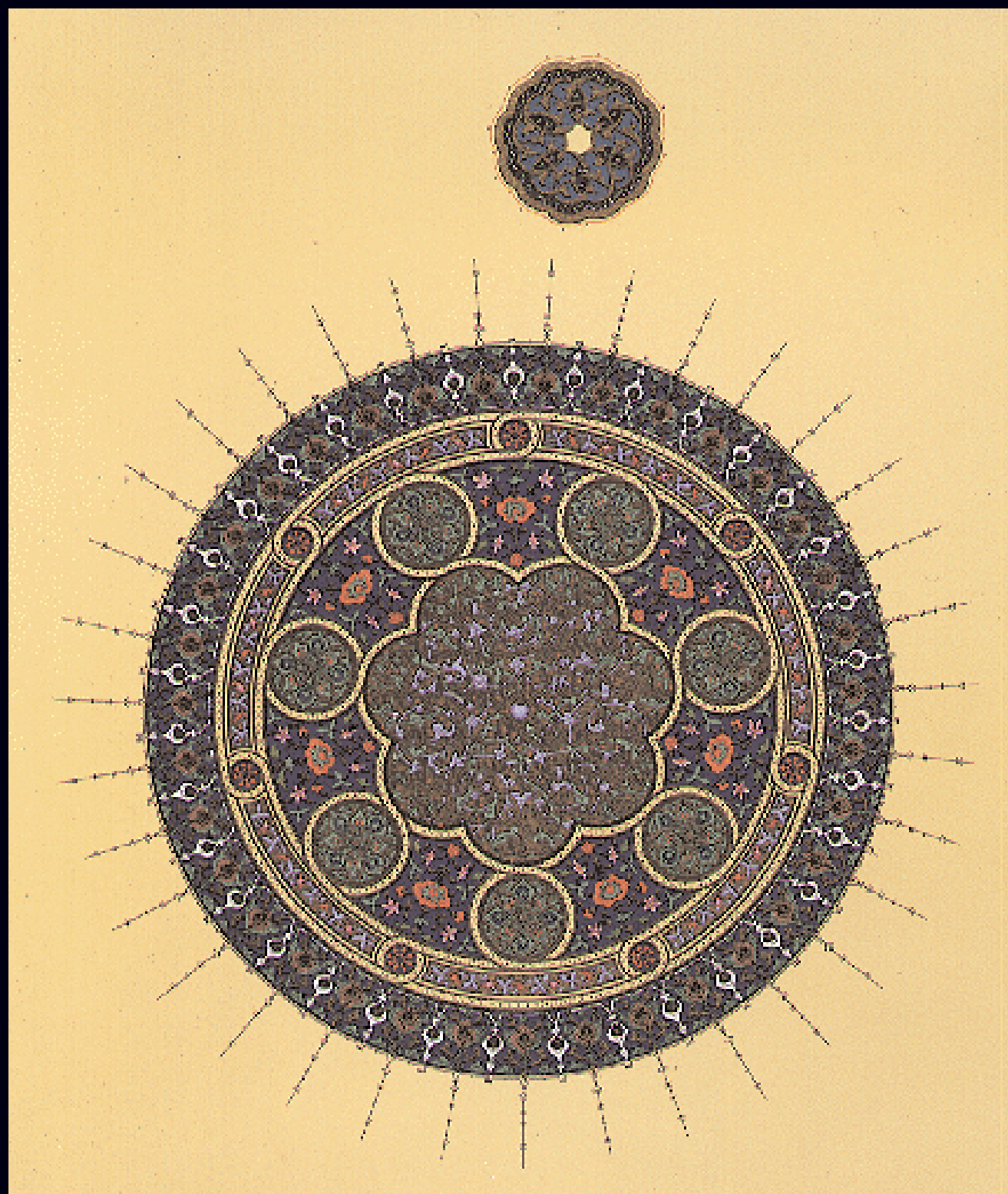
PERSIA FIRST GRABBED THE ATTENTION of the historic world in the sixth century B.C. with the exploits and conquests of the near-legendary Cyrus the Great, conqueror of the Medes, and of his successors Darius and Xerxes, so strikingly described in the renowned fifth-century B.C. classical Greek works of the historians Herodotus and Xenophon. Powerful rulers dominated the Iranian world and influenced the great ancient cultures that surrounded it, until the native dynasties succumbed to the unrelenting push of Islam in the early seventh century A.D. Persian culture and society were then fundamentally altered, yet the interplay between the older era and the Islamic era yielded a new, uniquely Iranian amalgamation.

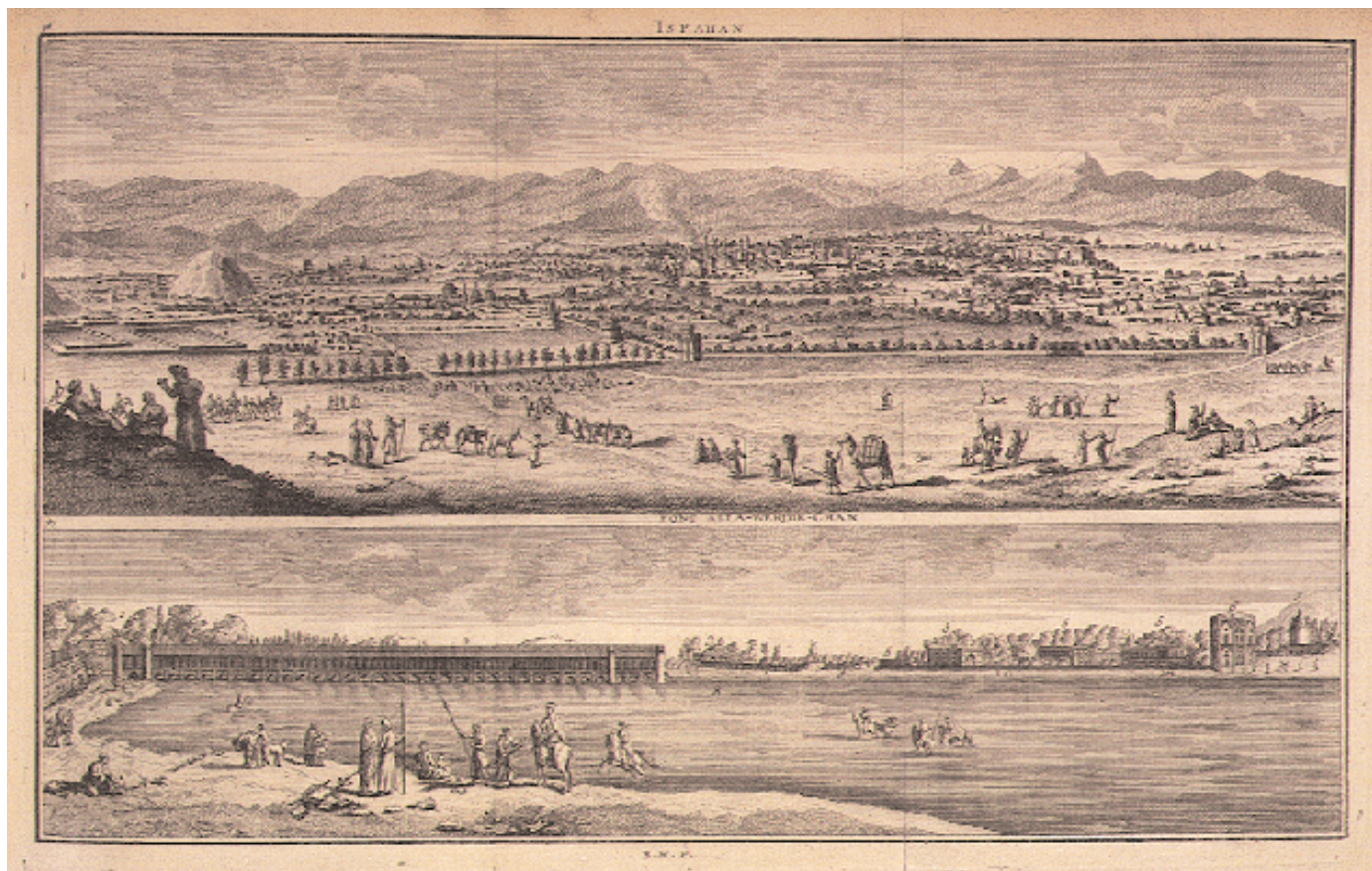
The growth of a new and strong dynasty under the Azerbaijani Safavids (A.D. 1501–1736), with the backing of Anatolian and Syrian Turkomen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the importance of Iran to European mercantile interests, especially under the British East India Company, explain the growth of materials about Iran and the countries held within its empire. The foreign relationships which arose in that era, with the Ottoman Empire and Russia to the north and the European countries of the west, still influence contemporary events in Iran.

This accounts for the need for a comprehensive repository of materials in Persian and in its related Indo-European languages—Pushto and Dari in Afghanistan and Kurdish in Armenia, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. These collections, allied with multiformat research collections housed elsewhere in the Library of Congress, form an invaluable treasury of knowledge on the religions, society, culture, art, and architecture of the past and present Iranian worlds.

The growth of interest in Iranian studies in the United States and the development of the collection at the Library of Congress began almost simultaneously in the late nineteenth century. Persian monographs collected by American missionaries in Persia were donated to the Library in 1872–73. After United States and Persian diplomatic relations were established in 1883, Persian citizens, too, began to donate their works to the Library. Then, in 1945 the Near East Section came into being, and staff were hired to ensure more systematic acquisition of Persian, Afghan, Pushto, Kurdish, and other Iranian-language research materials.

The collection of Persian classical materials includes the literary monuments of Firdawsī (A.D. 940–1020), author of the influential *Shahnamah* (Book of kings), and the poetry of Omar Khayyam (d. 1123) and of the moralist Sa'dī of Shiraz (1184–1291). The Iranian rare book collection has many important modern publications as well, such as the *Āriyana Almanac* from the 1920s, the *Safarnamah* of the





ABOVE. Isfahan, a vital center of trade in late medieval Iran, is here depicted in two panoramic scenes from volume 4 of the 1725 Paris edition of *Voyages de Corneille Le Bruyn par la Moscovie, en Perse, et aux Indes Orientales* by the Dutch traveler and artist Cornelis de Brun (1652–1726/27). Le Brun's memoirs are profusely illustrated with portraits of the people, the architecture, and

the flora and fauna of the countries he visited. (*Rare Book and Special Collections Division*)

OPPOSITE. Legends surrounding the fourth-century B.C. Macedonian conqueror Alexander the Great were transmitted by many Mediterranean peoples from antiquity to the present in variants of the work titled *The Alexander Romance*. These illustra-

tions are from volume 4 of a lithographic edition from Bombay, India (1767), of the Persian-language *Iskandernāmah* (The book of Alexander). In the first, the hero Alexander is shown fighting a dragon. Displayed in the other is a typically Persian decorative device, which combines the artistry of the Persian past with the detailing of the Islamic period. (*Near East Section*)

RIGHT. In a photograph from the collection “Documentation of the Ayatollah Khomeini before and after Iran’s Islamic Revolution,” Sharok Hatami captures Khomeini (seated) and his family in a rare glimpse into the revolutionary leader’s domestic life. (*Prints and Photographs Division*)



OPPOSITE. The intricate monumental tomb of Ahmad Shah Durani, seventeenth-century founder of the kingdom of the Afghans in Kandahar in south-eastern Afghanistan, is surrounded by the domestic architecture of the period. An unpublished album of rare nineteenth-century photographs includes rural scenes, portraits, and architectural details of importance to ethnographic and cultural research. (*Near East Section*)

Qajar shah Nāṣir al-Dīn (1848–96), and a thirteen-volume commentary on the *Maṣnavī* of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (A.D. 1207–73) by Muḥammad Taqī Ja‘farī. Afghan rarities are represented by the Pushto *Armaghān* of Khwushhāl Khan, an anthology of seventeenth-century literary works.

The section possesses many Persian manuscripts, comprising all disciplines, but dominated by the historical. Many of these are exquisitely illuminated in the peculiarly beautiful amalgam which is identifiably Iranian, especially copies of the previously mentioned *Shah-nāmah* of Firdawsī. The collection also includes numerous anthologies of poets that are remarkable for the beauty of their calligraphy and miniatures as well as for their exquisite Persian bindings. Indeed, a great number of the Islamic book bindings acquired from Kirkor Minassian are Persian. These are both treats for the eyes and important for what they tell us about early book and manuscript production in the Islamic world.

The Library’s collection is strong, too, in monographs having to do with contemporary Iranian political life. From works about the Tūdah (Communist Party movement) in the 1940s, to the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil





An elaborate display of brightly enameled flowers highlights this lush eighteenth-century Islamic book binding from the Kirkor Minassian collection.
(Near East Section)



A grand array of styles of scripts and Islamic ornamental and iconographic motifs adorns this exquisite calligraphic sampler from the Iranian world, which was executed by Ḥusayn Qāyin in 1797. (*Near East Section*)



The contemporary Kurdish monthly journal *Sārah* (Tehran, Iran, 1990–present) is an important witness to the resurgence of political consciousness of the Kurdish people throughout the lands in which they are scattered today—from Iraq, Syria, and Turkey to the post-Soviet states of the Caucasus and Central Asia. (*Near East Section*)

Company, and through the dissident movements during and after the reign of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, these works document political movements of half a century. Well represented are the revolutionary works of the Ayatollah Khomeini, of Bani-Sadr, and of many others who became well known to the Western world during the last two decades of the twentieth century. Especially important is a collection of Islamic revolutionary photographs from that era taken, both in Iran and abroad, by Sharok Hatami. This collection is now housed in the Prints and Photographs Division, which is also home to the intricate, beautiful, yet wickedly satirical political cartoons about the same revolutionary era drawn by Ardeshir Mohassess.

Persian serial titles number in the hundreds and are both historical and contemporary. The Library holds important runs from the early twentieth century, such as *Sālnāmah-i Āriyān*, *Sālnāmah-i Pārs*, and *Armaghān*. The importance of Persian serials and newspapers manifested itself with the fall of the shah in 1979 and the need for accurate knowledge about the country, about Khomeini and his revolutionary movement, and about the Iranian people both in their native land and in exile. Not surprisingly, much of the material from twentieth-century Iran itself deals with Islamic topics, among which are *Itilā'āt* (1926–present), *Kayhān* (1941–present), and *Jumbūr-i Islam-i* (1979–present). Those from outside Iran deal also with secularism and democracy. These, together with Iranian, Afghan, and Kurdish dissident materials of all formats, written by expatriates and assiduously acquired by the Near East Section since 1979, form an impressive and especially potent part of the Persian collection.

The collection also includes important Afghani titles from the twentieth century, among them *Adab* (Kabul, 1930s), *Āriyana* (Kabul, 1930s), and *Pushto Almanac* (Kabul, 1930), as well as works of the Afghani Mujahidin starting with the early 1980s. The Kurdish collection, though spare, includes various materials that underscore the contemporary importance of this ancient Iranian people.

The nonvernacular collections, including papers of United States ambassadors and ministers in Iran such as Lloyd C. Griscom (1872–1959) and Loy W. Henderson (1892–1986), are maintained in the Manuscript Division and allow the researcher to examine the growth and nature of United States foreign policy vis à vis Iran. The Persian collection is also complemented in the Library's General Collections by the ubiquitous travelogues, historical and political works in Western languages, and art and archaeological treatises—such as Erich Friedrich Schmidt's unsurpassed discussion of the Achaemenid Persian capital, *Persepolis*. Other such materials are retained in the Rare Book and Special Collec-



tions Division, while numerous antique and modern maps can be found in the Geography and Map Division. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division acquired movies from Iran by important Iranian cinematographers, both for their aesthetic value and for the light they shed on contemporary Iranian society.

Researchers of the complex Iranian world from the days of Cyrus to the present are extremely well served by the comprehensive scope of this custodial collection and the ancillary collections that support it.

A variety of artifacts entered the Library through acquisition of the Kirkor Minassian collection. This finely executed enamel pencil box is covered with portraits, flowers, architectural scenes, and Islamic decorative devices and is illustrative of a style prevalent in eighteenth-century Iran. (*Near East Section*)



FROM THE NINTH CENTURY A.D. Turkic peoples from the Central Asian steppes started their odyssey to the West by making their way into Anatolia and Mesopotamia. With the eleventh century the Seljuk Turks had established a strong Turkish entity in these new lands. From the rise of the Ottoman Turks in the thirteenth century to their triumph in the capture of the Byzantine imperial capital of Constantinople in 1453, fascination with the Ottoman world grew and with it, a desire for information about it. The downfall of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the modern secular Republic of Turkey in 1923 changed the nature of the state, its society, its culture, and its literature in fundamental ways.

Though Turkish-language materials were not part of the focus of the Near East Section in 1945, a specialist was named in 1959 to guide the growth and see to the maintenance of that collection. The demonstrably satisfying result is that the collection of Turcica at the Library of Congress is now the largest such collection in the United States. The core of the collection resides in the vernacular materials in the various Turkic languages, dialects, and scripts held by the Near East Section. At present, it has custody of over 50,000 volumes of monographs and serials. Several thousand microfiche and rolls of microfilm and other vernacular collections in the section plus major possessions relating to the Turkic world in other divisions of the Library of Congress add to the richness of its holdings.

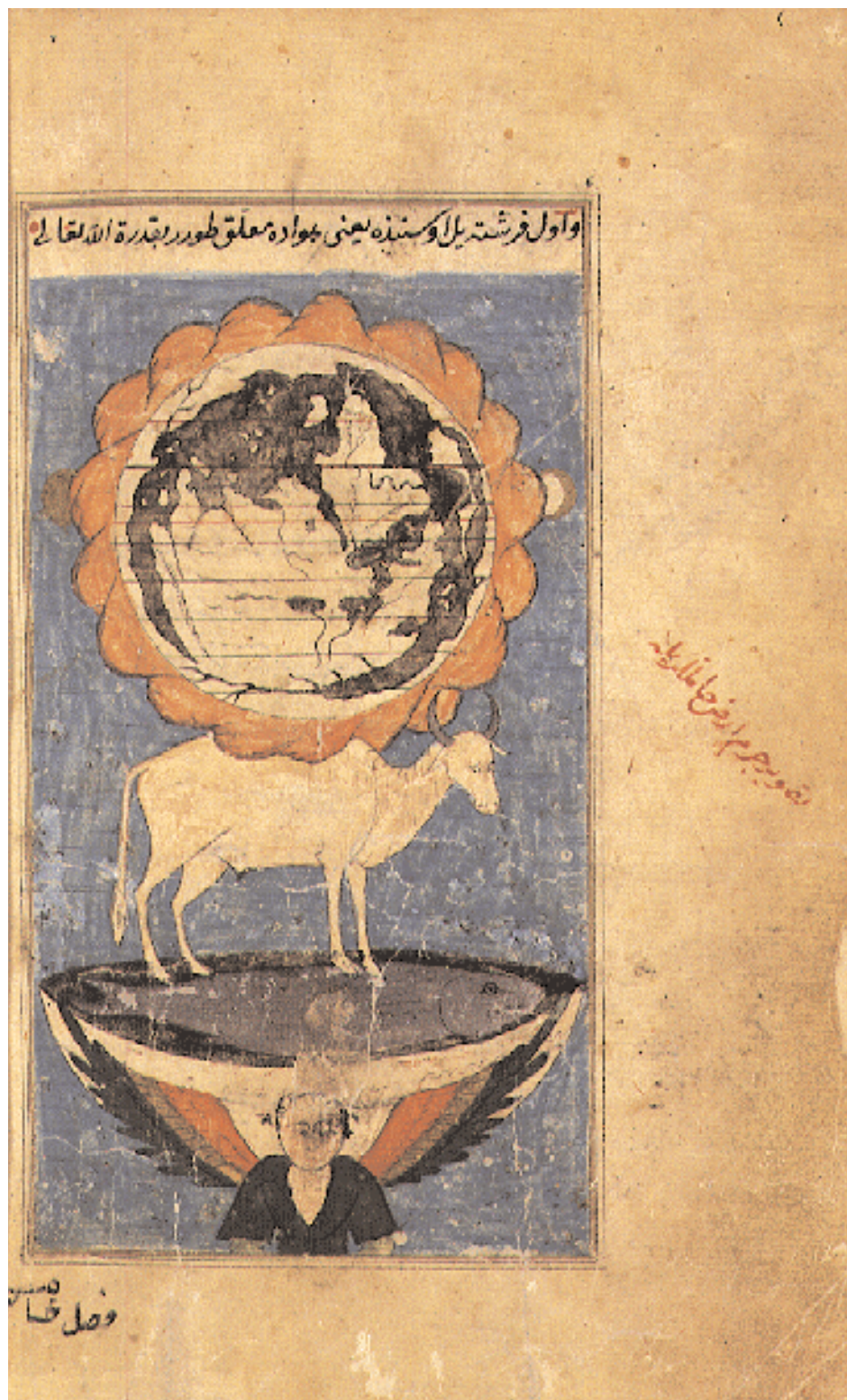
Because of this relatively late systematic development of the section's Turkish-language materials, the Near East Section's custodial collection of Turcica risked holding a preponderance of contemporary items. For example, the section boasts a complete set of Turkish Republic statistics (1923–present). This danger of fostering a contemporary collection alone has been counteracted by purposeful and assiduous efforts to acquire important books and serials dating from earlier eras.

By the end of the twentieth century, the Library had acquired approximately one hundred Turkish manuscripts, most of which serve researchers of religion. Among these is the section's earliest Turkish manuscript, Muhammed Haravi's *Tezkiretü'l-Evliya* (History of the saints) (1526), one of only three copies known to exist. Yazcıoğlu Mehmed's *Muhammediyye* (1583) and Zakarīyā Qazwīnī's *Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt* (The wonders of creation) also from the sixteenth century, are other notable examples.

The earliest of published works in the collection is *Vankulu Lüğati* (Vankulu's dictionary), printed in Istanbul in 1729. Other early publications include a number of the important and rare books printed by İbrahim Müteferikka during the 1730s as well as works from the press of the Imperial Engineering School. The Engineering School Press books are fine exemplars of the printer's art. Its *Nizam-i Cedid*

OPPOSITE. A polychrome map of Africa as published in the rare *Cedid Atlas* (Istanbul: Engineering College Press, 1803), the first world atlas printed by Muslims duplicating European cartographic methodology, of which only fifty copies were printed. The Library of Congress possesses one of only seven that are extant. (*Geography and Map Division*)

One of the most enduringly successful Arabic geographies of the Islamic Middle Ages is the *Ajā'ib al-Makblūqāt* (The wonders of creation) by the Persian author Zakarīyā Qazwīnī (d. 1283 or 1284). Two of the many copies known to exist are reproduced here. The first, from a manuscript copied in Turkey circa 1553, depicts a map, oriented to the south, with an angel holding a bowl of water that contains a fish on whose back is the globe-bearing ox. The second, a testament to the work's continuing popularity, portrays the mythical bird, the *Anka* (Phoenix), in a Chagatai Turkish edition lithographed in the Central Asian city of Tashkent in 1917. (Near East Section)





(The new order) (1798–1807) was the first attempt to promote reorganization and reform of the Ottoman government and state using European models. Beautifully hand-colored editions of Katib Çelebi's *Cibânüma* (Universal geography) (Istanbul, 1732) and his history of Ottoman naval campaigns are in the collections, as is the *Tarîh-i Hind-i garbi* (History of the discovery of America) (Istanbul, 1732), which is not only the first book about the Americas but also the first illustrated book printed by an Islamic people. Moreover, many of the section's seventy-one exquisite Islamic book bindings, are of Persian and Turkish detailing.

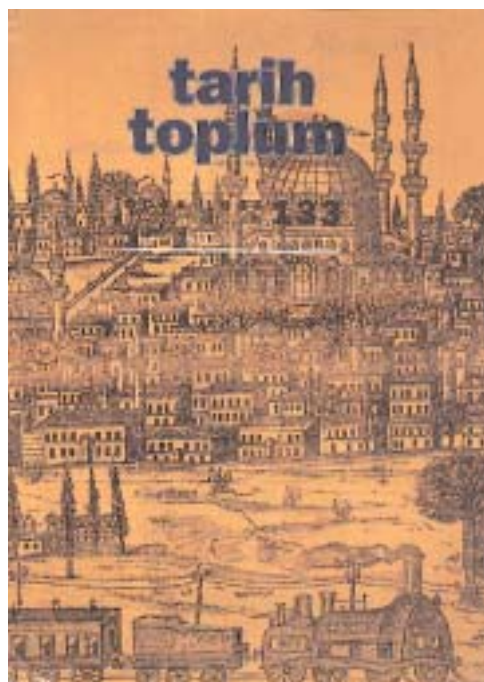
The section has acquired many works in Turkish published by the Bulaq Press during the nineteenth century in Egypt. Among these are the *Divan-i İzzet Molla* (Collection of İzzet Molla's poetry) and the *Hamse-yi Nergisi* (The five works of Nergisi), both published in Cairo in 1840. They were printed using the beautiful *Nasta'liq* (cursive script) typefont developed especially for literary works by that press.

Of inestimable value is the Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842–1918) Collection, presented to the Library of Congress by that Ottoman monarch. The collection consists of 402 volumes in Turkish and Arabic representing a wide spectrum of important topics. All are available to the researcher on microfilm, and some of the fragile volumes are preserved in the Near East Section's rare materials collection.

Among the more recent publications held by the section are complete runs of most of the academic serials and series published by Turkish universities and scholarly societies, such as the Turkish Historical Society's *Belleten*. The section further holds complete or nearly complete runs of serials published by the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union since 1955. Included among these are all the journals of the various writers' unions. The Turkish serial collection consists of approximately four hundred Ottoman and republican titles, such as *Servet-i Fünûn* (Istanbul, 1895–1901), *Türk Kültürü* (Ankara, 1963–present), and *Türk Dili* (Ankara, 1935–present). Major modern newspaper titles include *Akşam* (Istanbul, 1942–64), *Bariş* (Ankara, 1971–present), *Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul, 1924–present), and *Milliyet* (Istanbul, 1962–65, 1970–present).

Beyond the custodial vernacular collection of the Near East Section, the Library of Congress houses in its General Collections and in its other divisional collections large holdings of Turcica materials in many formats. Of particular note are the Sultan Abdul-Hamid II photograph albums in the Prints and Photographs Division. This intriguing collection is further strengthened and supported by that division's ancillary holdings, such as photographs of the Levantine Near East and the Ottoman Empire.

OPPOSITE. İbrahim Müteferrika published Abu Nasr Isma'il al-Jawhari's *Vankulu Lü-gati* (Vankulu's dictionary) in Istanbul in 1729. The first book printed by Muslims making use of movable type, this Arabic-to-Ottoman Turkish dictionary opens with a depiction of the impressive Ottoman imperial order issued by Sultan Ahmet III, which allowed the establishment of Müteferrika's influential and highly regarded publishing house. (*Near East Section*)



FAR LEFT. *Belleten* (1937–present) was the first scholarly journal concerned with history, archaeology, and ancillary disciplines published using the roman alphabet new to the Turkish Republic. It remains the leading scholarly serial in Turkey and is the preferred venue there for articles by scholars worldwide. (*Near East Section*)

NEAR LEFT. A nineteenth-century engraving of a railroad line in the Ottoman Turkish capital of Istanbul graces the cover of the January 1995 issue of *Tarih ve Toplum* (1983–present), a fine example of the popular press in modern day Turkey. (*Near East Section*)

The Rare Book and Special Collections Division houses significant holdings of pre-nineteenth-century travelogues written by European visitors to the Ottoman Empire, and the General Collections contain even more of this genre from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It should be noted also that virtually every scholarly work written in a European language about the Turks in Turkey or the Turkic peoples of Central Asia is held by the Library in its General Collections.

The acquisition of Turkish-language materials in the Near East Section has been significantly strengthened in the recent past by the establishment of the Turkish Retrospective Fund, which has contributed to the growth in size and prestige of the custodial collection.

The value of the section's Turcica collection has been proved by the scholarship produced based upon it. Researchers of Ottoman literature and history, of Turkish popular culture, of Islam in Turkey, or of the growth of secularism and the republic, as well as those interested in the contemporary Turkish scene, have at their disposal a vast variety of resources at the Library of Congress.

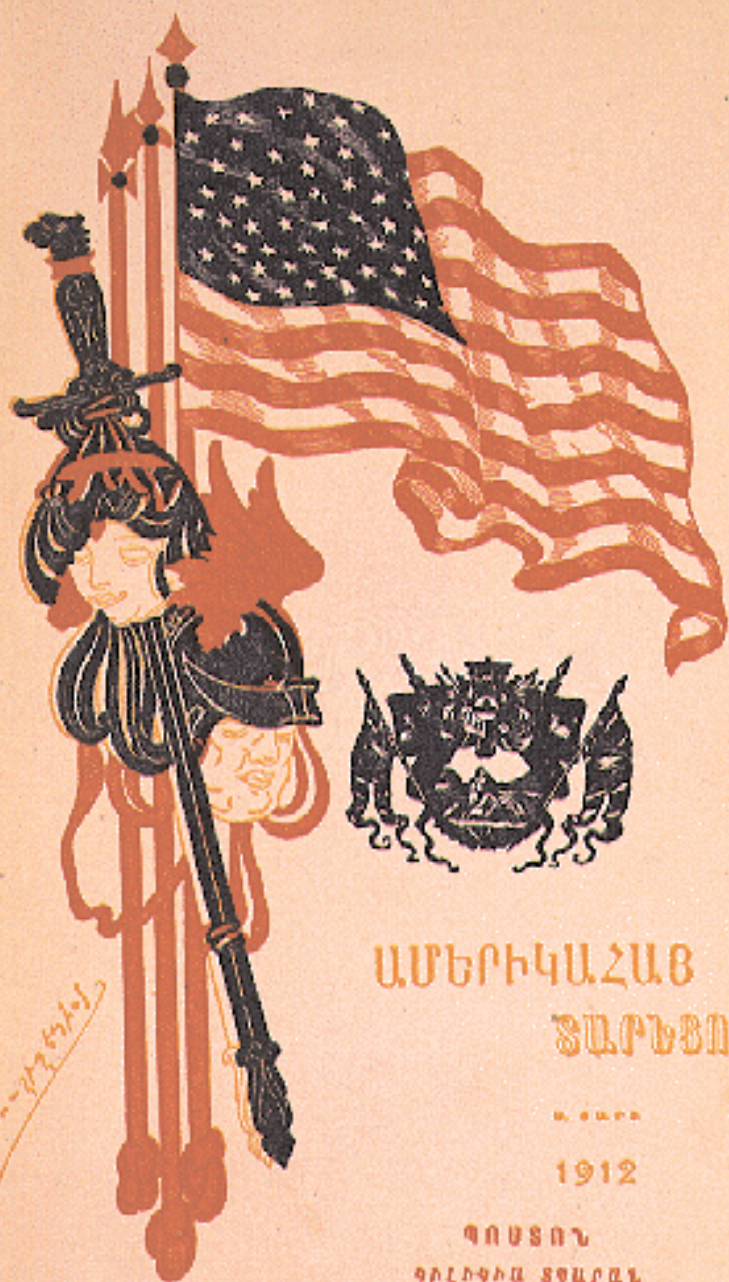
OPPOSITE. The military arts and sciences were important to the Ottoman state, as many early Turkish publications on this topic made clear. This highly ornamented device is in actuality a chart of the points of the compass from Katip Çelebi's *Tuḥfütü'l-Kıbar fî Esfar'il-Bihar* (The naval wars of the Turks) (Istanbul, 1729). (*Near East Section*)

The Near East Heritage in America

THE NEAR EAST COLLECTIONS may seem a tower of Babel to the Western world, yet these represent the literary ancestry of a considerable number of Americans. Sons and daughters of the Near East have journeyed to the New World from the very moment of its discovery; those of Arab and Armenian descent can be traced to the colonial era. It was undeniably, however, with the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century that the trickle of immigrants took on new momentum. At the dawn of the twentieth century, driven by economic motivation as well as a desire to escape from harsh conditions, wars, and massacres, immigrants began to arrive in droves, settling in the agricultural and industrial centers of their newly adopted land, starting families and establishing churches, mosques, and educational and social organizations. In so doing, they began to publish monographs, almanacs, serials, and newspapers both in English and in their native languages. They also attempted to preserve their native identities within the fabric of the new society by documenting their lives in their homeland.

The large and older Arab and Armenian communities started their considerable publication activities in the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. The Arabic-language monthly *al-Ālam al-jadīd* (The new world) commenced in 1909. The Armenians produced almanacs for their communities and journals through their native political parties, such as the Armenian Revolutionary Federation's *Hairenik* (Fatherland) (Boston, 1922–present). Iranians of all backgrounds have long been in the Americas, but it was with the fall of the shah in 1979 that massive immigration into the United States brought with it the growth of a diasporan publication activity. The section acquires and preserves the important weekly *Iran Times*. The Turkish American community trails in size, yet it, too, has established centers that have fostered scholarly publications, as well as popular periodicals such as the important bilingual weekly, *Turkish Times*. A small yet active Georgian community has been in America since the fall of the short-lived republic in 1920, and it, too, has issued publications that reflect its status within the United States, such as the rare English-language *Voice of Free Georgia*, which is in the Library's General Collections. Central Asian and Afghani communities are newly represented within the fabric of American society. Although each community is small, together they are beginning to contribute to the plethora of Near Eastern diasporan works published in the United States. All of these materials have been targeted by the Near East Section in its effort to document the experience of the various Middle Eastern communities within the United States.

OPPOSITE. Combining the symbols of historic Armenia with the preeminent emblem of their newly adopted home, the flag of the United States, the growing Boston Armenian community published the first volume of its *Amerikabay Tarets'oyts'* (The Armenian American almanac) in 1912. (Near East Section)



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In 1998, American Memory mounted on the Library of Congress Web site “California Gold,” the digitized version of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) California Folk Music Project, preserved in the American Folklife Center. The project sought to document the native musical heritage of immigrants to California in the 1930s. Drawings, photographs, and sound recordings of many ethnic groups, including Middle Easterners, are now available to music ethnographers and to the general listening public worldwide through the Internet. (See <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcchtml/cowhome.html>)

In short, the materials kept in the custody of the Near East Section—whether written in Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Iranian, Turkish, Caucasian, or one of the many other languages of the region—and supplemented by items in other formats of this magnificent archive of world cultures, represent the intellectual heritage of all Americans of Near Eastern ancestry. Preserved are the archetypes of the cultural, artistic, political, and linguistic identities that have in the past contributed to what is uniquely American and will continue to do so in the future.

The California Folk Music Project, sponsored by the WPA in the 1930s, recorded performances of various immigrant musicians in California. Joe Daniels, an Assyrian from Georgia, is seen playing the *tar*. Mary Goshtigian, an Armenian, was photographed playing the *oud*. (*American Folklife Center*)



A Note to Researchers

With the African and the Hebraic Sections of the African and Middle Eastern Division, the Near East Section moved into magnificently renovated quarters in the historic Thomas Jefferson Building in the spring of 1997. As a result, the section now offers the researcher a calm refuge in which advanced studies may be accomplished and where an extensive collection of reference works dealing with the Arab world, Armenia and Georgia, the Iranian world, Turcica, Central Asia, and the Middle Eastern heritage within the United States can be consulted.

The section boasts specialists who are trained in the languages and cultures of each of these areas. A significant part of their duties is dedicated to active acquisition of research materials published in both the vernacular and other languages. Working hand in hand with the African and Middle Eastern Acquisitions Section of the Acquisitions Directorate, with book vendors, and especially with the Library of Congress Overseas Offices in Cairo, Karachi, and New Delhi, these specialists shape their respective custodial collections during their stewardship and direct the growth and preservation of the individual collections, while also opening access to them. The section has often benefited from the active participation of members of the communities it serves in the acquisition of materials vital to the health and maintenance of its vernacular collections, and it appreciates such involvement.

As skilled guides to these valuable research materials, the section's specialists provide reference and research guidance to Congress, to their representative communities, to the public, and to representatives of U.S., Near Eastern, and other governments. Active reference—in person or via letter, fax, e-mail, or telephone—is an integral part of their duties to the institution and to the nation. Through these specialists, the section has created and hosts ongoing professional seminars, annual lecture series, topical exhibits from items in its collections, and academic symposia.

The section welcomes reference inquiries and offers of assistance with its acquisitions mandate. The relevant addresses are

Near East Section
African and Middle Eastern Division
Library of Congress
Thomas Jefferson Building, Room 220
Washington, D.C. 20540-4820

Phone: 202 707-5421
Fax: 202 252-3180
E-mail: amed@loc.gov
Homepage URL: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/amed/neareast.html>

OPPOSITE. View of the African and Middle Eastern Reading Room.

Countries and Areas Covered by the Near East Section

Afghanistan

Algeria

Armenia

Azerbaijan

Bahrain

Comoros (with the African Section)

Cyprus (with the European Division)

Djibouti (with the African Section)

Egypt

Georgia

Iran

Iraq

Jordan

Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan

Kuwait

Lebanon

Libya

Mauritania (with the African Section)

Morocco

Oman

Palestinian National Authority

Qatar

Saudi Arabia

Somalia (with the African Section)

Sudan (with the African Section)

Syria

Tajikistan

Tunisia

Turkey

Turkmenistan

United Arab Emirates

Uzbekistan

Xinjiang (with the Asian Division)

Yemen

Languages of the Near East Section Collections

Abkhaz	Komi
Altaic	Kurdish
Arabic	Kyrgyz
Armenian	Lezgian
Avaric	Mari
Avestan	Ossetic
Azerbaijani	Pahlavi
Bashkir	Persian
Berber	Persian, Old
Buriat	Pushto
Caucasian languages	Selkup
Chagatai	Sagdian
Chechen	Tajik
Chuvash	Tatar
Finno-Ugrian (with the European Division)	Turkish
Georgian	Turkish, Ottoman
Iranian languages	Turkmen
Kabyle	Tuvinian
Kara-Kalpak	Uighur
Kazakh	Uzbek
	Yakut

Included in the collections are materials in all dialects, ancient and modern, of the above.

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———. *Arab-World Newspapers in the Library of Congress*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1980. v, 85 pp. (Near East Series 1).

———. “Arabic Calligraphy in the Library of Congress.” *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 36 (Spring 1979): 140–77.

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Witherell, Julian W. *Afghanistan: An American Perspective: A Guide to U.S. Official Documents and Government-Sponsored Publications*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1986. xiii, 158 pp. (Near East Series 3).

———. *The Republic of Turkey: An American Perspective: A Guide to U.S. Official Documents and Government-Sponsored Publications*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1988. ix, 211 pp.

———. *Libya, 1969–1989: An American Perspective: A Guide to U.S. Official Documents and Government-Sponsored Publications*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1990. ix, 181 pp. (Near East Series 4).

The people of the Middle East were as eager to learn of the peoples and places the West as the West was to learn more about them. In 1732, the *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi* (The history of the discovery of America) was published in Istanbul by İbrahim Müteferrika. It has the distinction of being both the first illustrated book and the first book about America published by Muslims in the Near East. Depicted is the American animal par excellence, the bison. (Near East Section)





The Near East Section is responsible for reference assistance and acquisitions for the North African countries pictured in "Africa Nova Descriptio," from *Le Grand Atlas* (1667) by the scion of a Dutch fam-

ily of cartographers, Jean Blaeu. The second edition, in French, is the most extensive and consists of twelve volumes of intricate maps spanning the globe. (*Geography and Map Division*)



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN ILLUSTRATED GUIDES

Library Of Congress Africana Collections: An Illustrated Guide

Library Of Congress Hebraic Collections: An Illustrated Guide

Library Of Congress Near East Collections: An Illustrated Guide